

Eliza. Phillips 1790.

THE
Dead Saint Speaking,
TO
Saints, and Sinners Living:
In severall TREATISES.

VIZ.

Sinfulness and greatest evil that is in Sin, On 2 Sam.
24. 10.

Love of Christ to his Spouse, On Cant. 4. 9.

The Nature and Royalties of Faith, On John 3. 15.

Slowness of Heart to Believe, On John 1. 30.

Cause, Signes and Cure of Sinners to Sincerity, On
of Hypocrisie, with Help. S. Isaiah 58. 2.

Wonderfull Workings of God for his Church and Peo-
ple, On Exod. 15. 12.

Never before Published.



BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.

Late M^r of Christ Colledge in Cambridge.

Prepared for the Press by himself, during Life.

Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee from the body of this
Death! Rom. 7. 24.

But God commended his love towards us, in that whilst wee were yet
Enemies, Christ dyed for us. Rom. 5. 8.

LONDON:

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TO THE

Right Honourable, and Right Religious
Lord, *Robert Earle of Warwick*, Baron of
Leez, and to the truly Noble, and truly ver-
tuous, the Lady *Elianor*, Countess of *War-*
wick, his most pious Consort.

E. B. wisheth to your present prosperities, the addi-
tion of many dayes, increase of Grace in this
life, and the full fruition of Glory in
the life to come;

Right Honourable,

I *t was the purpose of my dear Hus-*
band deceased, to have presented
these his Works unto you Both, by
an Epistle Dedicatory, wherein
hee would have spoken his grati-
tude for your manifold favours. And when his
wasting weaknesses had rendred him unfit for that
intended service, hee desired, if these manu-
scripts should bee esteemed worthy of publick
view, they might come abroad under your Ho-
nours Patronage, to bee living evidences of his
high respect and unfeigned thankfulness. This
Narrative will, I humbly hope, make a satisfying
Apologie for my presumption, in prefixing your
noble Names before these his Sermons, which

The Epistle Dedicatory.

are likely to find the same good acceptance from the Presse (as some eminently pious and learned, upon the perusall of them judge) which they received from the Pulpit.

My prayers are, that Your Selves and Your Family, may both here and hereafter reap the fruit of all those encouragements, which many famous Ministers (some dead, and others surviving to do service) have received from Your Honours favour.

I humbly crave your acceptance of this Widows mite of Gratitude, for all the expressions of Your respect, both to my reverend Husband and worthlesse self.

Right Honourable, I am under many Obligations bound to bee

Your Honours

humble Servant,

ELIANOR BOLTON.

AN

An Epistle to the Reader.



THE Books of *learned* and *godly Ministers*, published by others after their death's, do for the most part come far short of those Books, which they themselves publish in their lives time. The *children* of their *brains* being herein, like unto the *children* of their *bodies*, who many times live plentifully while their *Fathers* live, but meet with much hardship after their death's. It may bee said of the posthumous works of most men in comparison of their first works Printed by themselves, as it is of *Abishai* and *Benaiah*, 2 Sam. 23. 19. 23. They were very valiant and honourable men, but they attained not unto the three first Worthies of David.

But it fairs far otherwise with this our *Reverend Brother*, hee hath attained a double happiness which few arrive unto. These ensuing Sermons were written out in a fait and legible Character, and prepared for the Press in his life time, and wherein they were defective, they have been supplied and made up, by an *able, learned, and judicious Friend*, so that the Reader may assure himself that they are no whit inferlor to those other Books, which he himself set forth, and that these *Fatherless children*, suffer no considerable prejudice by their *Authors* death.

The Subjects treated on in this Book, are all of them of singular use and benefit. Here you have exactly proved, *That Sin is the greatest of Evils*, and therefore

To the Reader.

fore calls for the *greatest sorrow*, the *greatest hatred*, the *greatest care* to avoid it, and to be rid of it. That the heart of *Jesus Christ* is exceedingly taken with his Church and people, and that therefore his people ought to be exceedingly in love with him. Here you have the *Nature, Necessity, and Difficulty of Faith*, learnedly and practically handled, and especially the *Privileges and Royalties of it*. Here also is shewed the *Cause and Cure of Hypocrisie*; And how far a man may go towards Heaven, and yet fall short of it.

The truth is, As the rude Satyre in *Plutarch*, who strove to make a dead man stand upright, had so much wit as to say, *Deest aliquid intus*, there wants a principle within to inable him to stand. So may I truly say of him that shall read this Book, and not be very well pleased with the matter therein contained, *Deest aliquid intus*, hee wants a principle of grace within, to cause him to close with such wholesome, spiritual, and heavenly truths.

There are other very profitable Treatises of this our Reverend, and godly Brother (prepared by himself for the Press) yet behinde, which may happily be brought to light, if God shall please to cause this Book to finde acceptance with his people, for whose spiritual advantage it is intended; And that it may obtain the end for which it is Printed, is the Prayer of

Thy Servant in the Work of the Ministry,

ED. CALAMY.

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Sin the greatest Evil.

2 Sam. 24. 10.

And now I beseech thee, take away the iniquity of thy servant,
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Parts of the Text.

Words opened.

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First, Gods servants may commit sin, commit iniquity, the iniquity of thy servant. p. 1.
p. 3.
Ibid.

Secondly, Fresh sinning, must have fresh repentings. Ibid.

Thirdly, There needs fresh pardon, for fresh revoltings. Ibid.

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Secondly, By Demonstration.

First, By Collation and Comparison.

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Fourthly, Other evils do but oppose our well being, nay only our well being for present.

Fifthly, Other evils are but destructive to a mans self, fight but against particulars.

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{ First, To prevent this; or

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- 1 Hereby Satan doth labour to cause Gods people to throw off the work, to desist in their way. ibid.
 - 2 If hee cannot prevail with Gods people, to throw off the work, yet hee hath a second end, and that is to discourage Gods people in the work. ibid.
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- 1 Either from particulars to generals. ibid.
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- 1 To aggravate their condemnation. ibid.
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- 1 If hee stands in that condition, hee thinks hee is sure enough. ibid.
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 - 2 To pacifie the quarrels, to satise the gripes, and gnawings of conscience. p. 281
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* Eyslow Ti.

* Dan. 12 3.

* Rev. 19. 10,
22, 9

Such was his Out-side : But * That, once within,
Thou may'st not, yet, behold; -- For fear of Sin :
It's * Dazeling Glory (Mortal) would amaze !
And make thee -- Idolize It's * Sun-bright raies :
Thy Sin would Crucify, what Grace hath Crown'd,
And Thou with shame It's Glory quite Confound.
No ; -- Stay a while : -- First, Get to Heaven; And then
Gaze - on ! And view the In-side of the Man :
Then Love, Adore, Admire, Triumph; And Sing
Eternal Hallelu-jahs to thy King,
That Pious Soul * disclaims thy Worship; -- He
(Thy Fellow-Saint) will worship God with thee.

*But is there left no Tran-script, here beneath,
Of that Fair-Copy; Rent from us by Death?
Yes : --- Turn these Pages (Reader) -- Thou wilt see,
His every-line Breaths Immortality.*

Ferd. Archer.



SIN



SINNE

THE

GREATEST EVIL

2 SAM. 24. 10.

And now, I beseech thee, Take away the iniquity of thy servant: for I have done very foolishly.



THE occasion of these words, was the hand of God upon the Children of Israel, for Davids Sin of Numbring the people.

You read in Verse 1. That David commanded Joab to go and number the people; and; at the first, Joab he dissuaded him.

But you will say, Was it not lawful to number the people? Did not Moses the same in the Wilderness, and Joshua, and Nehemiah?

Yea, But Joab saw the pride of Davids heart in it; as appears by his answer in Verse 3.--And Joab said unto the King, Now the Lord thy God adde unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundred fold. But why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing? notwithstanding the Kings word prevailed against Joab, & thought indeed to his trouble, and Israels cost.

Happy had it been for David, and Israel too, if the work had not been done. But Joab goes, and the number is brought in; There were Eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew sword, and the men of Judah were Five hundred thousand.

B

Well,

Well, But what was the *Fruit*? what was the *Effect* of this?

1. You read,---*Dauids heart smote him*, Verse 10. that is, *His Conscience accused him*. If *Conscience* be not a *Bridle*, it will be a *Whip*; if it be not a *Curb*, it will be a *Scourge*; if you will not hear the *Warnings*, you shall feel the *Lashings* of *Conscience*; if it do not restrain from sin, *Movendo*, by *Admonition*, it will put us to *Pain* in sin, *Mordendo*, by *Contrition*.

2. But there was not all; *God would punish him for the sin*; And you may read the *Sin* in the *Punishment*; He had *Gloried* in the *Number*, and therefore *God would Lessen the Number*.

Yet he puts it to his choice, which of the *Three judgements* he propounds (whether *Seven years Famine*, or *Three moneths flight before his Enemies*, or *Three days Pestilence*) he would take.

Every one was *Flagellum Mundans*, A *sweeping Scourge*.

But mark *Dauids* behaviour, *God threatens judgement*, and *David* goes and *Mourns for sin*: For *Dauids heart smiting*, and his *Prayer*, though set before, yet seem to be afterward, and an effect of the *Prophets* discovery of sin; as appears by the Verse following the Text; For---“*When David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came unto Gad Dauids Seer*---where you see it is rendred as a reason, why *his heart smote him*, and why he *prayed thus*---because the *Prophet* had been with him, and had convinced him of his sin, and denounced *Gods judgements* against him; whereupon *Dauids heart smote him*, and he *prays*---“*Take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly*.

But here it may be demanded. *Why, when God threatened judgement, David should go and pray for pardon of sin?* why did he not desire *God* rather *To forbear his strokes?* *To avert and turn away his wrath?* Than merely *To Beg pardon of sin?* or, if he had desired this, yet why did he not *Beg the other*, as well as that, and *joyn* them together in the *same Petition*?

Answ. 1. To teach us in all the pressures and evils upon our *Outward man*, to turn our thoughts *Inward*, and lament *sin*.

2. Because he saw *sin* the *Cause of judgement*; and therefore desires the removing of this, that so the other might be withdrawn also.

3. Because he knew the *judgement* could never be removed in *Mercy*, unless the sin were taken away. *Every Preservation is but a Reservation; every Deliverance is in justice, not in mercy, if sin be not taken away*.

4. He was more apprehensive of the *Dishonor of God*, by his sin, than of any *judgement* that his sin had brought upon him. Or,

5. He sees *sin* *The Greatest Evil*, and therefore seeks the redress of that, rather than of any other Evil---“*Take away the iniquity of thy servant*.

In the Text you may observe Two Parts of Prayer :

I. Confession.

II. Petition.

1. Confession, with self-judging---For I have done very foolishly.

2. Petition---Take away the iniquity of thy servant, joyned with faith. Or here you have,

1. The Petitioner, David, set forth from his Relation---Thy Servant;

2. The Petitioned : God.

3. The Petition it self---Take away, or Pardon the iniquity of thy servant; for the phrase seems to have respect to the Scape-Goat, a Type of Christ, which was to Carry away the sins of the people into the wilderness, Levit. 16, 22. thereby signifying Christs taking away sin.

There is little difficulty in the words, but what we may make a difficulty.

As indeed it would be a making of difficulties, to go about to expound that which is so plain, rather than an unfolding of them, if I should tell you of the several distinctions men make of sin, Three words in the Hebrew, חַטָּאת עוֹנֵת וְפֶשַׁע By one they will have to be meant Original Sin; by another, Infirmities; by the other your Grosser Sins. But upon examination, I finde them used promiscuously; and therefore such distinctions of them hath no bottom.

The letter of the words, and outward face of the Text, speaks Three Doctrines.

1. That Gods servants may commit sin, commit iniquity---The iniquity of thy servant.

2. Fresh sinnings must have Fresh repentings; If you Renew your sins, you must Renew your Sorrows.

3. There needs fresh pardon, for fresh revoltings: Take away. He doth not say, Assure me it is taken away; but---Take away. But this will not be the subject of my discourse now.

That which I intend to speak to, shall be,

The Time and Occasion of these words; which was, when Gods judgements were threatned against him.

1. Sin truly is, and Gods people do apprehend it to be, The Greatest Evil in the world.

He doth not say, Take away the Plague, take away the Judgement threatned; but, Take away this Sin. He lookt upon sin as the Greatest Evil.

2. When GOD threatens to punish sin, it is the best way to run unto GOD to Take away sin. Or, When GODs hand is either Felt or Feared, it should be a Christians wisdom To Repent of sin. To Desire sin removed.

We begin with the first,

Doctr. That sin truly is, and Gods people do apprehend it to be, The Greatest Evil in the world.

We will take it, 1. In its Pieces, 2. We will close them.

1. The Doctrine doth part it self into Two parts :

1. That sin is the Greatest Evil in the world.

2. That Gods people apprehend it to be the Greatest evil in the world.

1.
Sin the greatest
evil in the
world,

1. For the first, That sin is the greatest Evil in the world: I may shew this,

1. By Collation and Comparison of this with other evils.

2. By Demonstration and Proof of it to you.

1. If you Compare the Evil of sin, with other evils, you shall see how short All other kinde of Evils are to this Evil of Sin.

1. Most of all, other evils are but outward: They are but such as are on the Body, the Estate, the Name; but this is An Inward Evil. An evil upon the Soul, which is the Greatest of Evils.

2. All other evils are but of a temporal nature: They have An End, Poverty, Sicknes, Disgrace, all these are great evils; but these, and all other, they have An End: Death puts the conclusion to them all. But This Evil of sin is of an Eternal nature, that shall never have end. Eternity it self shall put no period to this.

3. All other evils do not make a man the subject of Gods wrath and hatred. A man may have all other evils, and yet be in the Love of God. Thou maist be Poor, and yet Precious in Gods esteem; thou maist be under all Kinde of miseries, and yet Dear in Gods thoughts to thee.

But now this is an evil, that makes the soul the subject of Gods wrath and hatred.

As the Absence of all other goods, the Presence of all created evils, will not make thee Hateful to God, if Sin be not there: So the Presence of all other goods, and Absence of all other evils, will not render thee Lovely, if sin be there.

4. All other Evils do but oppose your well-being, nay, and your well-being for present (for they cannot rob you of future happine(s)) But this opposeth your well-being for ever: For you cannot be Happy, if you be not Holy; Nay, this opposeth your Being. It brought Death; you would sin your selves into Nothing again, if God did not hold you up To be, that you might Be miserable for sin.

5. All other evils are but Destructive to a mans self: fight but against Particulars: But this is contrary to the Universal Good, contrary to God; and (as far as it may) Destructive to the very Being of God: As I shall shew hereafter.

6. All other evils are Gods creatures, and so far good. He

owns

Sin the Greatest Evil.

93

owns all the rest, he is the Author of all the rest---Is there any evil in the City that I have not done? Amos 3. 6, meaning, All the Evil of Punishment Penal, not Sinful Evil: But this is the Devils Creature, yea, and worse than he, being All sin.

7. All other Evils are Gods Physick, and used as Medicines,

71

1. For prevention of this. Or,

2. For the cure of this.

1. For prevention of this---That you might not be condemned with the world, he lays afflictions and evils upon you, 1 Cor. 11. 32.

He suffered Satan to tempt Paul, and gave him up to his buffetings, which yet is the Greatest Evil in the world next to sin, the Greatest penal Evil in the world. And all to prevent sin, as the Apostle himself saith, 2 Cor. 12. 7---God sent a messenger of Satan to buffet him---And what was the reason? why it was to prevent sin---Lest he should be exalted above measure: that is, lest he should be proud. And as he useth all other Evils for Prevention. So,

2. For the cure of sin. And you know, no Medicine can be so bad, as is this Disease. Now all other Evils God hath laid upon his people for the cure of sin, or for the recovery of them out of the state of sin.

And to speak as much as I can at once, There is not so much evil in the Damnation of a Thousand worlds of men for sin, as there is evil in the Least sin, the least sinful thoughts that rise upon your spirits, inasmuch as the good of these, falls short of the good and glory of God.

Thus you see, by Collation and Comparison of this Evil with others (in which I might much more enlarge my self) that, of all Evils, Sin is the greatest Evil, We will now come to

2. The Demonstration of the Point.

27
Demonstration
one.

1. Demonstration.

1. That which fighteth against, and opposeth the greatest Good, must needs be the greatest Evil. But now Sin opposeth and fighteth against the greatest Good. Hence a Father calls sin, *Dei-eradicium*, God-slaughter, that which strikes against the Being and Essence of God, that which (were it strong enough) were it the greatest evil, as God is Infinitely good, would labor to Un-do God. God is *Summum Bonum*; and indeed, *Non datur Summum Malum*, sin cannot be infinite.

1. Demonstration
tion or Reason
Sin opposeth the
greatest good a
1. God.

If Sin were as evil, as God is good; that is, Adequately, and Proportionably; if Infinitely evil, as God is good, sin would be Too hard for God to pardon, it would be Too hard for God to subdue, Too hard for God to Conquer; Sin would endeavor to conquer God:

Summum
villipendunt
dies illa

End

Indeed, there is *more evil in the least sin*, than there is *good in any*, nay *all the Angels of Heaven*; and therefore you see it conquered them, spoiled all their goodness, made them Devils; which it could not have done, if the good in them had been greater than the Evil in sin.

And, though it be not able to conquer God, to overcome him (there is more *goodness in God*, than *Evil in Ten Thousand Hells of sin*; and so it cannot overcome the *power of God*, the *mercy of God*, the *holiness of God*) yet it fights against God, and makes party against him every day. It musters up all its strength against God, and comes into open field to *Bid Defiance* against him every day.

Nay, when it is beaten out of the open field, by the *power of God*, and his *Ordinances*, then it hath *strong Holds*, as the Apostle tells us, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* and from thence fights against him, and opposeth him; there it lusts against him, it wills against him, the heart riseth against him.

When sin is beaten out of the field, yet a long time it will be, before it be beaten out of *strong Holds*.

When sin in *Practise* is overcome and conquered, yet sin in *Affection* is hard to be overcome: That Contrariety that is between God and your Heart is hard to be conquered.

It will cost you many a battel, many an assault, before you can conquer sin in its *strong Holds*, overcome sin in the *Heart*.

Though sometimes it may seem to be overcome, and to render up all: yet afterwards it gathers together again; and will make new and fresh assaults upon you, to weaken and to wound you.

Nay, and herein lies the *Malignity*, the *poisonous and venomous nature of sin*, that, though God hath conquered it, though it be never so weakned, yet will it act against God, spit its venome still.

An Emblem of it you have in the Thief upon the Cross; that when he was nailed upon the Cross, his hands and feet made fast, and had but one member loose; yet that *one member* could spit its venome at Christ, revile Christ; so, though God hath crucified sin, yet so long as there is any life in it, it will act it self, and spit venome against God, which shews that *Great Contrariety* betwixt God and sin.

And this *Contrariety* and *Opposition* of the *Chiefest Good*, must needs shew sin to be the *Greatest Evil*.

2. Demonstration.

2. *That which is Universally Evil; all Evil; and no good; must needs be the Greatest Evil in the world: But sin is All evil.*

As

As we say of God, *There is no Evil in him, He is All Good, Quodcunq; in Deo Deus est*: So I may say of Sin, *There is no Good in it, It is All Evil, Quodcunq; in Peccato Peccatum est.*

There is *some good* in the *worst things* in the world, and *some thing* in the *worst things*, to make them capable of our *choice* of them, in some cases; *some good in sickness, some good in Death*: But now there is *no good* in *sin*, nor can any considerations in the world make *sin* the *Object* of our *Choice*. Though you might avoid *Death* by *sin*, yet, because *sin* is *Universally Evil*, and *No good* in it, you may not make use of *sin* to avoid *Death*.

And therefore you shall read, That, when the Apostle would speak the *worst* of *sin*, he could finde no *Name worse* than its *Own* to set it out by, *Rom. 7. 13. ad finem*----*ἁμαρτωλὸς ἁμαρτία*—*Sinful-sin*. He calls it *Sinful-sin*, Nothing but *Sin*.

3. Demonstration.

3. That, which is the sole Object of Gods hatred, must needs be the Greatest evil: But *sin* is the sole Object. Not onely the Object, but the sole Object of Gods hatred: He hates nothing but *Sin*.

3. Demonstration.
Sin the sole object of Gods hatred.

His love runs in divers streams towards all things he hath made; But his hatred runs in *One Chanel* alone, and that is, Towards *Sin*.

If *Man* were made the *Center* of all other Evils in the world, God could Love him under *All*, if *sin* were not there. And, if there be a *Confluence* of all other Goods, *Health, Beauty, Riches, Learning, &c.* God hates you, if *Sin* alone be there, Gods love cannot be there, but his wrath abideth there.

4. Demonstration.

4. That which separates the soul from the chief good, that, which divides between the soul, and God the chiefest good, must needs be the Greatest Evil: But *sin* divides betwixt God and the soul, *Isa. 59. 2.* --*Your iniquities have Separated betwixt you and your God: Betwixt your souls, and my Grace; your souls, and my Comforts; your souls, and my Blessings.*

4. Demonstration.
Sin separates the soul from the chief Good (i.) God.

It was said of *Naaman*, That he was a *Great man, an Honorable man, a mighty man of War*: But he was a *Leper*, *2 Kings 5. 1.* So, whatever *Ornaments* a man hath, whatever *Gifts, Parts, Riches, Beauty, &c.* yet, if he be a *Leper*: though a *Learned man, a Rich man*, But a *Wicked man*, that spoils all the rest.

5. Demonstration.

5. Demonstration.

5. Demonstr.
Sin is the root
of all other
evils.

5. That, which is the ground and cause of all other Evils, must needs be the Greatest Evil: But sin is the cause of all other Evils.

Is the Old world drowned with water? it is for sin. Is Sodome destroyed with fire, and turned into an Asphaltite-lake to this day? it is for sin. Is Jerusalem laid on heaps? Sin hath done it. Should I enter on this, I should finde no end.

1. Of National
evils.

1. Sin is the cause of All National Evils: We will name some, and but name them.

1. Wars.

1. Wars. Judg. 5.8.---They chose new Gods: Then was War in the Gates. James 4.1. From whence come wars and fightings among you? is it not from your lusts?

2. Famine.

2. Famine. Psal. 107. 34.---He turneth a fruitful land into a Desert, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. Amos 4.6.---Therefore (sc. for their sins) have I given you cleanness of teeth in all your Cities, and scarceness of bread in all your places, &c.

3. Pestilence.

3. Pestilence; as Davids sin here of Numbring the people. Read Deut. 28. 21.---The Lord shall make the pestilence to cleave to thee, till he hath consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.

And as sin is the cause of National, so also,

2. Of Personal
evils.

2. Of personal Evils; and those are,

1. Temporal.

2. Spiritual.

3. Eternal.

Sin is the Cause, the Meriting, the Procuring Cause of all. All Evils are but the Births of sin; sin is a Big-bellied Evil, and all other Evils are but the births of sin.

1. On Body.

Those upon your Bodies; Sickness, Aches, Pains, Weaknesses.

2. On Soul.

Those upon your souls; Fears, Heart-breakings, Terrors, Horrors. If you could rip up sin, you would finde all these to lie in the bowels of the least sin.

Shall I tell you? Sin was the first Founder of Hell; that which laid the Corner-stone of that Dark Vault: for, before Sin, there was no Hell.

Nay, and it is Sin that Built up Hell, and hath fitted Hell with those Treasures and Riches of Wrath, Fire and Brimstone.

Nay, and that which still Addes to it, and increaseth the Fewel. Rom. 2. 5.---It treasures up wrath against the day of wrath.

And therefore being an Universal Evil, a Catholick Evil, the Womb of Evils, and Cause of all, it must needs be The Greatest Evil.

6. Demon-

6. Demonstration.

6. That which is worse than the Utmost Evil, must needs be the Greatest Evil: But sin is worse than the Utmost Evil. That, which is Greater than the Greatest Evil, must needs be Exceeding Great. Hell is the Utmost Evil; but Sin is worse than Hell it self. Hell separate from sin is but miserable, not sinful: A Penal Evil, not A Sinful Evil.

6. Demonstr.
Sin worse than
the utmost
Evil.

I say, separate Hell from sin (though we cannot really separate Hell from sin, yet an Intellectual Separation we may make: we may in our Understandings abstract Hell from sin) And then, I say, sin is worse than Hell; because Hell is but A Penal Evil, sin is A Sinful Evil; And there is no Penal Evil so bad as A Sinful Evil. There is good in the Punishment, the good of Justice: But no good in sin: And therefore sin in it self is the Greatest Evil.

Now we come to the Second, which is the Main. As sin is in it self, so

2. In the Apprehensions of Gods people, sin is the Greatest Evil.

1. Their sighs for sin.

2. Their sufferings to avoid sin do shew, they apprehend sin the Greatest Evil.

1. Their sighs for sin,---you may look into Davids Penitential Psalms, and see what sighs and groans for sin. Look into Psalm 51. Why, what was the reason of them? All the Sufferings, all the Evils in the world, would not so much have affected him, as his sin. Paul, Rom. 7. 24.---Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death! The Death of his body was nothing to him, in comparison of This Body of Death.

Paul went through many tribulations, endured a great deal of sufferings (as you may read 2 Cor. 11, 23, 24, 25. at large) yet all these Scourges, these Prisons and Persecutions, did not go so much to his heart; as sin, even the presence, though not the power of sin. Though he suffered much, yet we do not read, that ever he cryed, OH! for all; And yet he doth for Sin, OH! miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin!--So Peter, Manasseh, &c.

2. Their sufferings to avoid sin. Daniel was content to be thrown into the Den of Lyons, the three Children into the Fire, Paul and Silas into the Stocks; and many of Gods people have chosen to embrace Prisons, Stakes, Fire, and the hottest Persecutions, rather than sin.

Which doth plainly evidence to us, They esteemed Sin the Greatest Evil.

1. Greater Than Poverty, which yet is a great evil. Melior est

Panem mendicare, quam Fidem perdere. Better to Beg, saith one, than to sin,---*Heb. 11. 24. to the 28.*---*Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of sin for a season.* The like of that Christian-Moses *Galeacius Garacciolus*, who was a Noble Prince and Marquess, who yet, that he might not sin, left and forsook all he had, and betook himself to live meanly with the people of God, meely to enjoy the Ordinances. And *Musculus*, a man of excellent Learning, and a famous Divine, who rather than sin, would close with any condition.

The Story tells us, That being driven out of all he had, he was content, rather than sin, to betake himself to a *Poor Trade*, to be a *Weaver*, to get bread to maintain his wife and children. Afterwards, being cast out of that way, the world looking upon it as too good for him, he betook himself to work with a *Spade* in the *Common Ditch of the Town*, to get his living. He could down with any condition, rather than sin.

Nay, they have not onely apprehended sin a Greater Evil than Poverty: But,

2. Greater than Prisons, greater than Death it self. It was the speech of *Ambrose*,---*Vultis in vincula rapere? Vultis in Mortem? Voluptas est mihi:---Will you cast me into Prison? will you take away my life? All this is desirable to me, rather than to sin.*

When *Eudoxia* the Empress threatned *Chrysostome*, whom she afterward banished. He sends to her, Gotell her, saith he---*Nil, nisi Peccatum, timeo---I fear nothing in the world but sin.*

3. Nay, they have apprehended sin a Greater evil than Death. *Basil* speaks of a *Rich Virgin*, who being condemned to the fire, and sentenced to lose her estate, because she would not worship idols; yet afterward was promised life and restitution of estate, if she would; She replied,---*Valeat vita, Pereat Pecunia---Farewell life, let money perish.* Look through the *Ten Bloody Persecutions*, and our *Late Marian-days*, and you shall finde many instances to this purpose.

4. Nay, yet further, They have not onely apprehended sin a Greater Evil than Death; but yet more, A Greater Evil than Hell it self.

It was the speech of *Chrysostome*---*Ego sic censeo, sit assidue predicabo, &c.*---I thus think, and thus will I ever preach, that it is more bitter to sin against Christ, than to suffer the Torments of Hell.

Anselm saith,---That if on the one side were presented unto him the Evil of sin, and on the other side the Torments of Hell; he would rather choose to fall into Hell, than to fall into sin. At such a distance were their hearts set against sin: And nothing more ordinary than such expressions as these from the Saints, in temptations, in troubles of spirit, or in clearing their own hearts. Rather

slay

slay me; -- Rather Damn me; -- Rather cast me into Hell, than let me sin against thee &c.

But this shall be sufficient to clear the *Doctrinal* part. We come to the Application.

1. Confessary.

1. If sin be the *Greatest Evil* in the world; Then let us fall down and admire the *Wisdom* of God; and adore the *Goodness* of God, who, out of the *Greatest Evil*, could bring the *Greatest Good*: who makes the *Greatest Evil*, an *Occasion* of the *Greatest Good* that ever was wrought. 1. confessary.

Bernard was so taken up with the thoughts of it, that he saith, -- *Felix Culpa, qua talem meruit Redemptorem* -- Happy fault; which occasioned such a Redeemer!

We should be humbled for the fault, & bless God for the Remedy; and withal, admire that wisdom and that goodness, which hath taken occasion by mans wickedness, to declare his own goodness; by mans sin, to make known and express the infiniteness of his wisdom, power, mercy, justice, &c. That this should be an occasion to draw out all his Glorious Attributes: That he should bring Good out of Evil, Life out of Death, Heaven out of Hell, Good out of sin, Cordials out of Poison.

Let us never doubt, never suspect, but God can bring good out of any thing; turn the *Greatest Evils* to the advancement of his Glory, and the good of his people; who can, out of sin and Hell, bring good. What is it to turn Afflictions, Persecutions, the Plots and Malice of men? What is it to turn Troubles, Wars, &c. to his own Glory, and Advancement of his own cause? who was able to turn Sin's *Altitude* into his own *Height*?

He, that can turn the *Evil of sin*, which is *Pure Evil*, and the *Greatest Evil*, can much more turn the *Evil of Trouble*, to the good of his people.

This made the Apostle say, that -- *All things should work together for good to them that love God, &c.* He, that hath experience of this, needs not to doubt of any thing else. That God, that can turn Sin, can turn Afflictions, Crosses, Persecutions, &c. to the good of his Church and people.

2. Confessary.

2. Hence conclude then, That it is the *Saddest punishment*, the *Fearfullest judgement* in the world. To be given up to sin. This is the utmost punishment that God inflicteth upon men; and therefore the *Greatest of all Punishments*. 2. confessary.

God doth usually proceed by Degrees, in the ways of his judgements: first, he begins with lesser; if lesser will not do, then he proceeds to greater, he will punish yet *Seven times more*, and still the further he goes, the greater are his strokes.

Now this is the finishing, the concluding stroke; this is the last punishment, and the Greatest of all other, To give a man up to the state of sin; To say to a man, *Thou that art filthy, be filthy still, and thou that art unclean, be unclean still.* This he tells them in Ezek. 24. 13--Because I would have washed thee, purged thee, and thou wouldst not be purged; therefore thou shalt not be purged. And so he tells the Israelites--Because you would have altars to sin; therefore altars shall be to you to sin, Holi. 8. 11.

Oh! There is no sadder judgement in the world, than for a man To be given up to his own hearts lust. This sets an Eternal night of Darknels.

A Meipso me libera, Domine, saith Augustine, Good Lord deliver me from my self. You had better be given up to the lusts of men, to the malice and cruelties of blood-thirsty men; better to be given up to the utmost rage and malice of our bloody Cavaliers and Irish Rebels, than to be delivered up to *your selves*, to the lusts of your own hearts. Nay, you had better to be Given up to Satan, than to be Given up to your selves, your sins.

The Incestuous person was Delivered up to Satan, as you read, 1 Cor. 5. 5. And was restored again; and the better for it. But we never read of any, who were Delivered up to themselves, who ever returned: never any, who were Given up to the lusts of their own hearts, that ever recovered. Better then To be delivered up to Satan than to sin; inasmuch, as All Penal Evils fall short of Sinful Evils.

It is Judicial, in respect of God, who may punish one sin with another, and curse sin with hardness of heart. But this is a sinful evil in respect of us; we bring the writing and the wax, and God puts to the seal, and then we are shut up for ever.

And you are in the high way to this, who go on in sin, and will not be reformed; when God hath laboured by Sickness, Afflictions, to recover you, you are in the way to this Final Doom, *Thou that art filthy, be filthy still; Or,*

3. Confess any.

3. Confess any!

3. If sin be the Greatest Evil in the world. Then see what fools they are, who seek to rid themselves of other Evils, by the Admission of sin. He who labors to prevent other evils, or remove other evils, by the admission of sin, runs into the greatest evil of all. He kills himself, to save himself; he destroys himself, to preserve himself. He that thus saves his life, and loses his life.

There were never any times so bad, but Gods people might have been safe in them, if they would have admitted of sin. But they have seen their safety, so lie in Suffering, when they could have no safety, but in the Admission of sin; You see it in the practice of the Three Children, O

It was the speech of the *Primitive Christians*, when they were threatned with Prisons and Death, if they would not renounce *Christ-Parce precor, Imperator. Tu Carcerem, Ille Gehennam*. *S. are, good Emperor, thou threatenst a Prison, but Christ Hell.*

When *Cyprian* was sentenced to dye upon the same ground, the Governor perswaded with him, that he should pity himself, and rather *Renounce his error, than lose his life, and console a little on it.* He answers him--*Fac quod tibi praeceptum est: In re sum iusti nulla est consultatio*: Sir, you are my Fudge, you are none of my Counsellor: In so clear and just a cause there needs no Counsel. I will not dishonor the justness of my cause, to enter into Parlee, and Consultation, whether to suffer, or sin. The like of that *Virgin* whereof *Basil* speaks, who bade adieu to estate and life, rather than abandon her Profession.

Oh! it were a sad thing to secure our selves by that, which is our ruine; to purchase our liberty by bondage, our safety by sin. You see what it cost *P. Spira*, and *Cranmer* in *Queen* *Mary's* days, who knew not how to be avenged on himself for his act, but by *Burning that hand first, that had subscribed to sin.*

It is better to be still in Prison, than for sin to scopen the Prison door: Inasmuch as its better to be *Gods Prisoner*, than the *Devils Freeman*. Better to lose all, than to preserve our estates by the admission of sin.

And therefore, whatever your troubles are, whatever your fears, whatever your dangers, bevvare of preserving your selves, or purchasing liberty, or life it self, at so dear a rate as by the admission of sin; by *Dishonoring God, and wounding your own conscience*. Beware of getting *Man your Friend*, by purchasing *God to be your Enemy*.

We know not yet what our times may come unto, but it is out of the reach of the power or malice of men. *To much you miserable, if they do not first make you sinful.*

4. Confessary.

4. If sin separately considered, be so great an Evil: What then is sin circumstantiated? sin against knowledge, against nature. If there be so much evil in sin, in the least sin, but then in the greatest. If *Adultery* be so great, how great then are *Adulteries*? If *Impenitent thoughts* be so sinful, as having more sin in them, than all the treasures of heaven (besides *God and Christ*) can expiate; what then are *rebellious thoughts*, *sinners will*, *Rebellion*, *insolent*, *Adulteries*, *contemplative wickedness*, *covetous Aims and Ends*, *contempt of God*, *flourishing and undervaluing of his works*. If there be so much sin and hell in a vain fellow, what a hell of sin, what mountains of wrath in your *Carrian-communications*, your *glorifying discourses*, your bloody and horrid oaths and blasphemies?

Nay,

Nay; if there be so much evil in *one sin*, and *one sin* simply considered: what shall we think of *sin compounded*, *sin circumstantiated*, *sin made exceeding sinful*? *sins* against knowledge, against means, against mercies? Oh! sit down and consider one sin, and see much in it.

Such a sin I committed against knowledge; such a one against checks of conscience; such a one against the motions of the Spirit, &c. and tell me, if the least sin be not exceeding sinful.

§. Confessary.

§. Confessary

If sin be so great an evil, then see *what fools they are*, who make a mock at sin. Prov. 14.9--*Fools make a mock at sin*; they sport at sin. It is a sport to swear, to be drunk, &c. they will sin for sport and recreation. It is their recreation to do evil, to drink, to swear, to lye, to profane Gods-day--- These are *Fools*. What, Natural Fools? No: he that goes about with a Whistle, and a Bable, and a Coat, is in far better case than he. He is a Spiritual Fool, the greatest Fool.

Will you sport with poyson? will you sport your selves with Hell? nay worse, Will you recreate your selves, with destroying your selves? will you sport your selves with that, which was so bitter to Christ? and will be so to thee, if ever thou be pardoned.

Who would sport at that, which is the misery of lost men and Devils, both here, and in Hell to eternity?

One would think this poor sport and recreation, to tear in pieces the flesh, and wound, and shed the blood of *A Stranger*, of *An Enemy*; but how much more of *Our Dearest Friend*?

Thou, who sportest at sin, dost so with Christ, sportest thy self in killing Christ, crucifying Christ, tearing the flesh of Christ again. Every oath is a dagger to his heart, as the spear to his side again.

It is the highest piece of a Devilish nature in the world, *To sport at sin*: None but Devils do it. It is the *Burden of God*, he complains of it; and he accounts it an ease, when he is rid of you--- *Ab! I will ease me of my adversaries*, Isa. 1. 24.

It is the Wounding of Christ, the Grief of the Spirit, the Trouble of Angels, the destruction of the Creatures. Will you sport at that, which hath brought all evil on man, all on Christ? which hath made Hell, fuelled Hell, and the Torment of souls for ever?

Oh! make not that your joy, which was Christs sorrow, and will be yours eternally, if now your joy in sin, be not turned to sorrow for sin.

§. Confessary

6. Confessary.

6. If sin be the Greatest evil, Then see the utter impossibility of any thing under heaven, to relieve and help us from under the guilt of sin, save JESUS CHRIST only. 6. confessary.

Hast thou committed but one sin? thou hast done that which all the Treasures of Righteousness in Heaven and Earth are not able to relieve thee, or help thee in, save JESUS CHRIST.

There is as much required for the answering the guilt of one sin, as the guilt of a thousand.

Infinite Righteousness is required for one, and no more is required for a thousand: And that Righteousness none but Christ alone hath.

Nothing can relieve us, but that which is Adequate in Righteousness to the Evil of sin. Now there is no righteousness in the world, that is proportionable to the Evil of sin, but the Righteousness of Christ.

1. Our own, you know is too short; it is called A menstruous rag. A rag, and therefore cannot cover us—Menstruous, and therefore though it should cover us, yet it would but cover filth with filth; as the Prophet speaks, Isa. 30.1.—They cover, but not with the covering of my Spirit, that they might add sin to sin; that is, the sin of their righteousness, to the sin of their unrighteousness. They cover a blot, with a blot; add sin to sin, dung to dung, woe to woe.

2. Nor will the righteousness of the Law be large enough, if it were supposed that a man were able to fulfil all that righteousness, and keep the whole Law—Presents obedience, though supposed to be Adequate to the Righteousness of the Law, will never answer for former offences and disobediences.

The Law indeed is strong enough to damn a thousand, but cannot save one; it can pour Hell, and Wrath, and Condemnation upon a World of sinners, but is not able to pour Grace, or to give Justification to one—The Apostle tells us, Rom. 8.3.4. What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh—God (sending his own son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin) condemned sin in the flesh—The same Apostle also tells us, Gal. 3.21.—If there had been a Law given, which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the Law. The Apostle tells us again, Gal. 3.17.—The Law was given four hundred and thirty years after the promise, to shew we must not work, that we may be justified; but be justified, that we may be able to work. If God had intended The Law, the instrument of Justification, he would have given the Law Four hundred and thirty years before the promise.

3. Nay yet further, It is not the righteousness of Angels (which yet

yet is a Greater Righteousness than that of the Law; inasmuch as the Angels were above *Man in Innocency*) because this also is but a *created Righteousness*, a *finite Righteousness*, and no way proportionable to the evil of sin. If it had, one sin had not spoiled those glorious Angels of their Goodness at once, and made them Devils: which that sin doing shews, There was more evil in sin, than Good or Righteousness in them.

Well then, This shews the *utter impossibility of any other under heaven, or in heaven, to Free us from the Evil of sin, but JESUS CHRIST*. Nothing but Infiniteness can deal with sin. It must be *Infinite wisdom--To finde out a way*. It must be *Infinite mercy--To pardon*. *Infinite power--To subdue*. *Infinite merit---To purge and cleanse*. And *Infinite Grace--To destroy sin*.

However you think of sin, yet this hath been the Great Enemy which God and Grace have been contending withal, ever since the world began.

And it hath put *All-God* to it, even the *Infiniteness of the infinite God* to rescue us, and to save us out of the Hands and Power of sin.

His infinite Wisdom, Power, Mercy, Truth, Holiness, have been all imployed to conquer sin; I say, so to conquer sin, as to save you the sinners.

The Great design of God in sending Christ into the world; his Incarnation, Humiliation, Death, Passion, all were about this, The conquering and destroying of sin.

How Great an Enemy was this, that God must send out his Son to conquer it? He can arm Flies, Lice, Frogs, the meanest of Creatures, to overthrow the Greatest Power and Puissance of the earth: but no less than his Son was strong enough to conquer sin.

You may think of sin as meanly as you will; swallow it without fear; live in it without sense; commit it without remorse; yet assure your selves, that this, you make so slight of, required *No less than the infinite power of God, to conquer; the infinite mercy of God, to pardon; the infinite merit of Christ, to answer for it*. It was that which fetcht the Dearest Blood from the Heart of Christ, and will have Thine too, if thou gettest not an interest in him,

7. Consolatory.

a) 7. Consolatory.

7. If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then see how much we are bound to CHRIST, who hath born your sins, who hath born *All this evil for you: you, who have an Interest in him*.

Oh, the Love of CHRIST! that he should bear sin, which is more than all miseries! a greater evill than Death, than Hell it self is!

If there were one in the world, that were content to be Poor for you, to Bear Pains for you, to be Sick for you, to be Arrested for you, to go to Prison for you, to Dye for you; nay, to Bear the Wrath of God for you, nay, the pains of Hell for you: How would you think your selves bound to such an one for doing it?

Why, This hath CHRIST done for you. He hath Born sin, which is a Greater Evil than all these: An evil, that hath All these evils in the bowels of it. Such, as none but Christ was Able to Bear.

If God laid the least sin upon thee, pure sin (which none but CHRIST did ever bear here in this world) it would crush thee to pieces with the weight of it, though all the Pillars of Heaven, all the Glorious Angels, should contribute their strength to thee, to help thee to bear thee up.

The least sin doth deserve and draw down an infinite wrath, which nor thou, nor all the Angels in Heaven are able to stand under.

The Damned bear it in Hell. They bear it, and cannot bear it. They are slain with it, but cannot dye. Ever consuming, never consumed.

And therefore how much are you bound to CHRIST! who hath Born sin, a Greater evil than All other Evils; and with sin, All the Torments, and Wrath, and Justice due to sin.

All the world is not able to expresse that Torment which Christ indured, when he did Bear sin, when he did sweat drops of blood, clods of blood; when he wrestled with the justice, did bear the wrath of God; when he cryed out,---My GOD! my GOD! Why hast thou forsaken me!--A strange speech from him; who was the Son of God.

Gravos Sanguinis.

Which made the Fathers of the Greek Church say, "ΑΙ ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩΝ ΛΟΓΩΝ, &c. By vertue of thy unknown labors, and those sufferings not revealed to man, Have mercy on us.

It is no dishonor to Christ, to say, That whatever the sufferings of the Damned were In Pondere, Christ indured; though not In Specie, for the kinde.

And therefore let me say again, How much are you bound to Christ, who hath born your sins for you! And the more bound, because it was a Voluntary act of Christ: none could inforce or constrain him to it. Now the more willingly a Courtesie is done, the better it is. This doth inhanche and heighten a courtesie, when it is done willingly.

We use to say of such good turns, which come willingly, that we do account them double courtesies. The will doth make all Great. As the more vwill there is in sin, the Greater is the sin: And this makes The Sin against the Holy Ghost. It is done--Destinata Malitia--with devilishness and desperateness of will.

¹⁰⁰ The more Will there is in Service, the more acceptable that Service is: Whatever you do for God, the more Will there is in it; the more God esteems it; vvhhere, on the contrary--*Si quid boni Triste feceris, Fit de re magis, quam à te.* So here, The more Will there vvas in this Great act of Christ, the more are vve bound to Christ for it.

Now if you look upon it; from the Beginning to the End, you shall finde nothing but Meer Love, meer good-will in it.

His first undertaking of it was Voluntary. It was a Voluntary Agreement betwixt God and Christ: A willing Contract made in Heaven with God, That he would undertake this great work.

And, he came into the world with as much Willingness, Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7---Wherefore, when he comes into the world, he saith--- Sacrifice and Offerings thou wouldst not have. In burnt-offerings, and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure---Then said I,--Lo, I come to do thy will; O God--Setting forth the Freeness and Willingness of Christ to undertake this work.

And hence the Angels sung at his Incarnation---Good will to Men. It was nothing but meer Good will.

And, when he was in the world, he carried on the work with as much Good will. He tells us--For this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world--Nay, and he saith---He was in pain till the hour came; viz. in pain of love, till the hour came.

And, when the hour came, though it was a Black and Dismal-hour, called, The hour of Darkness; yet he would not desert us, he would not leave us. If he had, He had left us in Hell, without all recovery. But he would go through with it, though it made him (so far as he was man) to strange at the work of his own mercy. Nay, He would bear sin, and bear wrath, and would lay down the utmost drop of blood in his body.

Oh! Oh! Think with your selves, you, that are The People of God, How much you are bound to Christ.

How may we say, with Bernard--*Tu Vita mea: Ego mors tua: Tu Justitia mea: Ego Peccatum tuum. Tu calum meum: Ego Gehenna tua. Tu Divitia mea: Ego Paupertas tua*---Thou art my Life, am thy Death. Thou my Righteousness, I thy Sin. Thou my Heaven, I thy Hell. Thou my Riches, I thy Poverty. Oh! how are you bound to Christ, who hath born sin!

2. But yet more, How are you bound to Christ, who hath So Born sin, as we shall not bear it: So paid the Debt, as we are discharged? Col 2. 14.---Blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances, that was against us, and contrary to us, taking it away, and nailing it to his Cross. As the Death of Christ was our payment, so the Resurrection of Christ is our discharge, Rom. 4. ult. Who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. Are we not Justified by his blood? Yea, we are; and therefore he did not rise formally, to justify us; but to declare, that we were justified, that we were acquitted, that our sins were pardoned.

Had

Had Christ been still in Prison, under the chains of death, we could not have had any Assurance that our debts had been discharged: As the Apostle saith elsewhere--If Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins. But now Christ being Arrested, cast into Prison, laid in the Grave, and having Broken the bands of Death; in which it was not possible for him to be held; Having Risen again; By this is declared, That our sins are discharged.

If indeed Christ had so born sin, as that yet we should bear it; What were we the better? But Christ having so born sin, as that we shall not bear it, How infinitely are we bound to Christ for this!

Christ hath left nothing for us to do; but, To receive what he hath Purchased, and laid up in the hands of a Father: Nothing; but, Sue out an Acquittance; yea, And at the hands of him, who is just, and will not deceive us; at the Hands of him who will certainly bestow whatever his Son hath so dearly earned at his hands.

If a man Dye, and leave Legacies in the hands of such who are faithful; may we not go and require them? When Christ Dyed, he intrusted All his Merits into the hands of his Father; and he hath left nothing for us to do; But go, and require all.

God entred into Bond and Covenant with Christ; That, if he would Bear sin, we should not bear them. That, if he would Dye for sin, He would Pardon sin; for all that is included in Isa. 93-- He shall see the Travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied.

Wel, now Christ hath done this, and having done it, he hath given all his fathers bills & bonds into our hands; & withal, a letter of attorney, whereby we are enabled to call for all this, at the hands of God.

It was for us, that Christ undertook the work; and all that Christ did, it was to ingage God to us: first to satisfy him, and then to ingage him; to make God our debtor, vvho vv ere once his debtors. And, as long as there is any of the Blood of Christ to give out (which will never be spent, it is an everlasting righteousness) so long is the mercy of God, nay; the justice of God ingaged, to bestow it on us, vvho by faith come over to him.

And there remains nothing for us to do, in point of justification; but, To sue out all that that Christ hath purchased.

We live in the vvorld, as if vve vv ere to purchase a pardon, vvhen vve are onely to receive a pardon.

God arresteth us for the Debt of sin; But do you think it is, that we should pay it? alas poor creatures! No, it is but to drive us out of our selves, and to bring us over unto Christ, vvho hath already paid the debt.

Ahd, Oh! how should this make us advance Christ, admire Christ, prize Christ! What should indear our hearts more to Christ, than this, That he hath born our sins, and so born them, as we shall never bear them? if vve have an interest in him.

8. *Confessary.*

8. If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then it calls out, 1. For the Greatest Sorrow. 2. For the Greatest Hatred. 3. For the Greatest Care to avoid it. 4. For the Greatest Care to be rid of it.

a.)

1. Sin calls for
greatest sorrow

If sin be the *Greatest Evil*, Then it must have *The Greatest Sorrow*. No affliction, no trouble, no evil, should be so bitter to us, as sin; because sin is the *Greatest Evil*.

It is a sad thing to see our hearts tender, and sensibly affected with *Lesser evils and troubles*; and yet to be hard and insensible for sin, which is the *Greatest of evils*.

It would therefore be our wisdom, when any other evils be upon us, *To turn all our sighs, tears and sorrows upon sin*.

It is an Aphorism in *Physick*—*Erumpens sanguis, ventu scilicet fistula*: If a man bleed vehemently in one place, they let him bleed in another, and so turn the stream of blood another way.

It should be our wisdom, when our souls bleed, and our hearts mourn for other evils, *so turn all those mourning affections upon sin*: Let them run in the right chanel.

Those tears must be wept over again, which are not shed for sin. Sorrow is like *Mercuries Influence*: Good, if it be joyned with a Good; Bad, if it be joyned with a Bad Planet.

It is not so much the Sorrow, as the Ground and Spring of the Sorrow. The object of it is to be taken notice of. Sorrow was naught in *Judas*, good in *Peter*; it was naught in *Saul*, good in *David*. In the one, it was a Sorrow to death; in the other, a Sorrow to cure the wound of Death. In the one, worldly, in the other, godly. *Worldly sorrow causeth death*. And such is all sorrow, that hath not sin for the ground, grace for the principle, God for the end.

Where sin is apprehended the *Greatest evil*, it will have the *Greatest sorrow*: Sorrow to exceed all other sorrows.

1. *Though not ever in quantity and bulk, yet in quality and worth*: A little Gold is worth a great deal of Earth and Rubbish.

2. *Though not in strength, yet in length and continuance*: Other sorrows are but like a *Land-flood*, for a time, occasioned by a Storm; which, when that is over, the flood is down. This Godly sorrow doth arise from a spring, and having a fountain to continue it, it is *Permanent*, when the other is gone. This is the difference between the Godly, and the other.

Gods people, their sorrows, which are *Spiritual*, do arise from a spring; their worldly, from a storm, a tempest. The wicked, their *spiritual sorrows* arise from a storm, some present wringing of Conscience, fear of wrath; and their worldly sorrows arise from a spring.

Where sin is apprehended the *Greatest Evil*, there it shall have the *Greatest sorrow*.

1. *A sorrow Proportionable to the Measures and Greatness of Sin.*

2. *A sorrow Proportionable to the Merit and Desert of Sin.*

As the merit of sin is infinite, so the sorrow for it must be an infinite sorrow. Infinite, I say, *Not in the act, sed Affection, not in the act and expression, but in the Desire and Affection of the soul.*

He, whose *Heart and Eyes dry up together, whose Expression in Tears, and Affection of Sorrow, do end together*; though he had wept a sea of Tears, he had not yet truly wept for sin.

Where sorrow is Godly, it hath *Affections of mourning*, when the expression of mourning ceaseth; because every drop of tears doth arise from a spring of tears within.

As every *Act of Faith* doth arise from a *believing disposition*; an *habit of faith* within; every *act of Love*; from a *Principle of love* within: So every expression of sorrow from an affection of sorrow in the spirit. Hence, we read, *1 Sam. 7. 6.* their sorrow is exprest by this *Metaphor*.--*They drew water (as out of a well) and poured it out before the Lord.* Their eyes did not empty, so fast as their hearts filled. Their eyes could not pour it forth, so fast as their hearts did yield it up. All their *Expressions of Mourning* did fall short of those *Affections of Sorrow* which were in the heart.

This is *sorrow for sin*: A *sorrow proportioned to the measure, to the demerit of sin*: A *sorrow*, that doth exceed all other sorrows; though not in *quantity*; yet in *quality*; though not in *strength*, yet in *length and continuance*.

2. Is sin the *Greatest Evil*, Then it calls out for the *Greatest Hatred*. Nothing is properly the *Object of Hatred*, but *Evil*: And that not *All kind of Evil*: but *sinful Evil*.--*Penal Evils* are rather the *Objects of Fear*; than of *Hatred*, because these are *Improperly Evil*.

2. Sin called for the greatest Hatred.

Nothing indeed is *evil* but *vwhat makes us evil*: and these may be a means to make us *good*; and therefore are not properly *evil*; and so an *Object of hatred*.

Sinful evil is properly the object of hatred, because this is *properly evil*: and being the *Greatest of Evils*, should therefore have the greatest of our hatred, *Psal. 92. 16.*--*Those that love the Lord, see that you Hate evil.* It is not enough for you, to be *angry* with sin; and *displeased* with sin; for so a man may be with his *Friend*, one whom he loves, upon some discourtesie. Nor is it enough that you should *strike sin*; for so many do to day, and embrace it to morrow: But you must endeavor to *kill sin*. *Hatred* labors after the *un-being* of that it hates: Nothing but the *destruction and blood* of it, will satisfy the soul that truly hates sin.

There is a great deal of *mistake* in men; concerning this point. I might shew you the *several reasons* of the *spirit* concerning it in brief, and how far those come short of *hating of sin*.

1. A man may fall out with a sinner, by whom he hath been drawn into sin, and yet not Hate the sin; execute the Traytor, and yet like the Treason.

2. A man may fall out with himself for sin, and yet not hate sin; When he hath brought some inconvenience to himself by his sin, which otherwise he liketh well enough.

3. A man may fall out with sin, and yet not hate sin: Cast away the coal, when burnt with the fire that is in it, and yet not offended with the blackness of it, or the defilement which he getteth by it.

3. Sin calls for the greatest care to avoid it.

a)

3. If sin be the Greatest Evil; Then it calls out for the Greatest Care to avoid it. Men are naturally afraid to fall into evil. What study, vvhhat care, vvhhat endeavors to prevent Evil? Did you apprehend sin to be the Greatest of Evils, there vould be no less care to avoid sin. You vould endeavor to walk closely and exactly with God; to Beware of all the Occasions, allurements, &c. which might draw you to sin. You would watch in all Times, in all Companies, good and bad, in all Places: None are so secure, but you may fall into sin, if you be neglective of your Christian Watch.

Thus, where sin is apprehended to be the Greatest Evil, there will be the Greatest care and circumspection against sin. Such a man

1. He is Acquainted with the falls of others, which are to him, not Land-Marks to Walk by: but Sea-Marks, and Rocks to Shun.

2. He is Acquainted with the weakness and wickedness of his own heart and spirit; and therefore watches.

He knows he cannot trust any member alone, without a Guard upon it.

The eyes are full of sin: Adultery, Pride, Envy, lusts of the Eye; 1 John 2.16. And he cannot trust his eyes, without Jobs Covenant--I have made a Covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think on a maid? Chap. 31.1.

The Tongue is full of sin: Of Curings, Murmurings, Revilings, Vain-Communications: And there is no trusting of it, without Davids Bridle, Psal. 39. 7--I will keep my mouth, as with a Bridle, that I offend not with my Tongue. He knows his own weakness and wickedness; and therefore dares not trust any member, without his Keeper.

3. Such a man, he is acquainted with the power and policy of Satan: who, as Luther calls him, is Non Promotus, sed Expertus Doctor. A subtle enemy, whose Temptations are called--Τὸ Βίβρι τὸ Σάταν, Rev. 2. 24.--Τὸ Νοῦμα αὐτοῦ, 1 Cor. 2. 11.--Τὸς Μυθοποιῶν, Eph. 4. 14.

He suits his temptations according too.

4. Such an one, he is acquainted with the danger and deceitfulness of sin; and how is

1. Deceitful

1. Deceitful in its Object. 2. Deceitful in its Arguments. 3. Deceitful in its Pretences and Exoneration. Nullum in iustitia sine patrocinio.

4. Deceitful in its Interactions.

5. Deceitful in its Promises. And therefore will he keep an holy circumspection, an humble, awful, jealous fear over his own (heart) lest he should fall into sin. He looks on sin, as his Greatest Evil; and his Greatest care and endeavors are to avoid sin.

4. If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then should it be our chiefest endeavors to be rid of sin. Every man would labor to be rid of an Evil, and the Greater the Evil, the greater is our desire to be rid thereof.

4. Sin calls for greatest endeavors to be rid of it.

Now sin is the Greatest of Evils: How much more then should we labour and endeavor to be rid of the Greatest of Evils?

Alas! Alas! what are all other Evils, to the Evil of Sin? which makes our good, evil. And yet to see the perverseness of mens spirits, they would fain be rid of all other evils, but not of Sin: so Pharaoh--Take away this Death, this Plague. They complain of the evil caused, but not of the evil causing--of the evil punishing but not of the evil punished--Flagella dolent: Quare Flagellantur; non dolent, saith Augustine: They howl under the present scourges and afflictions, but never lament the sin; they would fain be rid of the Pain, but yet they would fain keep the Taub. Whereas alas! till sin be removed, the afflictions will not be removed. If they be, yet not in mercy, but in judgement: And your Present Deliverance doth but Reserve you for a severer stroke.

Where on the contrary, If sin be removed, the affliction will be removed. They are like the Body and the Shadow. Remove the Body, and the Shadow must needs be removed. Sin is the Body; and afflictions be but the Shadow.

Or, if the Afflictions do continue; yet, if God take away sin, the Evil of the Evil is taken way. Sin is the sting of every Affliction. Sin is that which imbitters every Cross: And sin being taken away, that which is Vindictive is taken way, and that which is Medicinal, and for Salvation, doth remain. It is more fruitful, than penal: All for merciful ends, and out of merciful respects; when sin is taken away.

1. If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then let us rather choose to fall into the Greatest Evil in the world, than into the least evil of sin.

All other Evils have some Good in them, and are to be the Objects of Choice, in case we cannot avoid them, but we must admit of sin. Thus you see Moses did, as you may read, Hebrews 11:25. He chose rather to be afflicted with the people God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

But

But now sin, it is *All-evil*, and *No-good*; and there is nothing in the world should make us to *chuse sin*.

2. Is sin the *Greatest Evil*? Let this then put us on to *pity* and *pray* for such, who are under a *State of sin*. You pity *sick Friends*, *poor Friends*, *undone Friends*. But alas! what are all these evils, to the *evil of sin*? what is *Poverty*? what is *Sickness*? what is *anything*, to the *Evil of Sin*? All these are but *Outward*: this is an *Inward Evil*. All these are but of a *Temporal nature*; *Death* but a *Conclusion* to them all. But this is of an *Eternal nature*. All other will never make you the *Object of Gods wrath* and *hatred*.

And therefore spend some tears, put up some prayers for such, who are under the *state of sin*. O (saith *Abraham*) that *Ismael* might live in thy sight! So say thou, There is such a *Friend*, and such a *Friend*, a *Brother*, a *Father*, &c. who lies under *sin*, is in a *state of sin*; Oh! that thou wouldst pity their souls! Oh! that thou wouldst snatch them out of the *state of sin*!

3. If sin be so Great an Evil, Let us then fall down and *Admire*,

1. The greatness of Gods *Patience* in bearing with sinners.

2. The greatness of Gods *mercy* in pardoning sin.

1. Admire Gods
patience in
bearing with
sinners.

1. Here *Admire* the greatness of Gods *patience* in bearing with sinners. It may be thou hast been an *Unclean Sinner*, a *Drunken sinner*, a *Swearing-wretch*, these twenty, thirty, forty, it may be three score years, and more. And hath God spared thee? Oh! here see the wonder of Gods *patience*!

If it were not, that God is *Almighty* in the power of his *patience*, it had been impossible he should have spared thee so long. He tells us so, *Hos. 11. 9.* I am God, and not man---I will not enter into the city, viz. to destroy it. So *Mal. 3. 6.*---I am *JEHOVAH*, I change not---Therefore ye sons of *Jacob* are not consumed; Implying, if he had not been God, if he had not been *Almighty* in the power of his *patience*, they had certainly been cut off long before.

If men be daily provoked and irritated with injuries, and do not come out to revenge, we attribute it either to their *Pusillanimity*, or to their *Impotency*; either to their want of *courage*, or want of *Power*. But now it is not so with God, His *patience* is his *power*. *Numb. 14. 17, 18.* when God had threatned to destroy them, *Moses* prays to God to forbear them, and he calls that *Act* of his *patience*, no less than his *power*---Now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken---The Lord is long-suffering, &c. where you see, he makes his *patience* his *power*. And so it is indeed, if you consider what sin is. Shall I say no more of it, than this, which God saith, *Levit. 26. 21.* It is contrary to God.

Sin the Greatest Evil

25

1 It is *contrary to the works of God*. As soon as God set up and perfected the frame of the world, sin gave a shrewd shake to all, it unpin'd this frame, and had like to have pull'd all in pieces again. And had it not been for the promise of Christ, all this frame had fallen in pieces again.

1 Sin contrary to Gods works
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If a man should come into a curious Artificers shop, and should with one blow dash in pieces a Piece of Art, which cost him many years Study and pains the contriving of it. How could he bear with it? Thus sin did, and yet that God should forbear. Oh! Omnipotent patience!

2. But yet further, It is *Contrary to Gods nature*. God is holy, sin unholy; God is pure, sin is filthy; and therefore compar'd still to the most filthy things in the world, to the Poison of Aspes, to Ulcers, Soars, &c. If all the Noysom Pollutions in the world met in one common Sink, it would never equal the Pollution of sin.

2 Sin contrary to Gods Nature.

God is good, perfect Good: Sin is evil, universally evil. There is good in all other things, Plague, Sickness, Hell it self, in a kinde, hath a good in it: None in sin.

Sin is the Practical-blasphemy of all the name of God. It is the Dare of his Justice, the Rape of his Mercy, the Fear of his Patience, the Slight of his Power, the Contempt of his Love: It is every way contrary to God.

3. It is *contrary to the will of God*. God bids us---Do this; Sin saith--I will not do it--Sanctifie my Sabbath--I will not sanctifie it. Here is Contradiction: And who can endure Contradiction?

3 Sin contrary to the will of God.

It is set down as a great piece of Christs sufferings, Heb. 12.3. That he indur'd the contradiction of sinners against himself: certainly it was a great suffering. How can a Wiseman indure to be contradicted by a fool? And here, that Christ, who was The Wisdom of the Father, should bear with such contradiction from fools; here vvas a great piece of Suffering.

Now sin is a contradiction of God: Sets Will, against Wisdom; and the Hell of a wicked Will, against an Heaven of Infinite Wisdom. And that God should bear vvith such sinners; here is a Wonder.

You know in all the Creatures, Contrariety makes all the Combustion: It makes all the War in nature, it causeth one Element to fight against another. Fire against Water, Water against Fire: It vvill make very Stones to sweat, and burst asunder.

Travel through the vvhole Creation, and you shall not see Any Creature, that can bear vvith its Contrary. And that God and Sin should be Contrary; and yet the Sinner live in the World: Here is a Wonder, a VVonder of Patience.

*admire Gods
mercy in par-
doning sin.*

2. Is sin so Great an Evil? Let us then fall down, and *Admire* the greatness of Gods mercy in pardoning sin.

You see how the Prophet cries out and *Admires*, Mic. 7.18.-- *Who is a God like unto thee! That pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the Transgressions of the remnant of his heritage!*

It is one of the Greatest works, that God doth in the world, To pardon sin. A work in which he declares, *All his glorious Attributes: His Wisdom, his Power, his Justice, his Mercy, his Holiness, &c.* in pardoning sin.

Men that have cheap and slight thoughts of Gods Pardoning-Mercy; have thereby an evident sign, *They never had a pardon: never knew what it was indeed, To have a pardon.*

If ever any work in the world did put God to it, then this of the Pardon of sin. And, if ever God do intend thee any good, he will instruct thee, and rectifie thy judgement in this, Touching the Pardon of sin.

Therefore doth God humble men, at their Bringing-in, To raise up their esteem of a pardon, To advance the greatness of his own Mercy, in Pardoning sin.

And indeed we should not need such great Preparations and Humiliations in coming to Christ, if we had but Greater thoughts of the Pardon of sin.

Men make no more of a Pardon, than to Cry God Mercy. Swear an oath, and then say, -- *God forgive me.* Or say, -- *Lord have mercy on me,* when I dye.

It was said of Lewis the 11. King of France, that He wore a Crucifix in his hat, and when he had sinned, he would but kiss his Crucifix, and then all was done. And so the Papists make it no more but a Crucifix, and a Confession. Ah! my Brethren, if ever God mean good to you, he will make you know what a Pardon is. Isa. 55.7. when God would draw men up, to Shew them a Pardon; he calls them *Above all the World*--- *My thoughts are not as your thoughts; nor your ways, my ways, saith the Lord. If they were, then I could not multiply Pardons: But as the Heavens are higher than earth, so are my thoughts above your thoughts, and my ways above your ways. I am infinite.*

If Gods Creating-mercy were so great, as David vvith doubled Admiration sets it out, Psal. 8.1. and the last verses, -- *O Lord, our Lord! how wonderful is thy Name in all the world! who hast set thy Glory above the Heavens.* What is then his Pardoning Mercy?

3. Lastly, Is sin so Great an Evil? Then see *What cause we have to humble our souls before God this day, That vve have had such slight thoughts of sin, vvho hath thus judged sin to be the Greatest of all Evils; What slight thoughts have vve of sin? vve can swallowv it, vvithout fear; vve can live in it, vvithout sense; vve can commit it, vvithout remorse.* All vvich shewv,

vve have but slight thoughts of sin, vve do not apprehend sin to be such an evil as indeed it is.

Nay, How faulty are Gods people themselves here? What mean thoughts have they of sin?

They are not so watchful against it, not so Burdened with it, not so troubled for it, as they ought to be. All which shew, that though sin do appear to them, to be A great Evil, and The Greatest of all other Evils, yet they do not apprehend it to be so Great an Evil as it is.

Now, that you may be able to have some suitable conceptions of sin to the greatness of it, that you may be able to see sin exceeding sinful, I will briefly present it to you in these Six Glasses:

1. Look upon it, In the Glass of Nature, which, though it be but a Dim-Glass, a Blown-Glass: Sin hath dimmed it, yet is this able to discover a great deal of the evil of sin. The very Heathen themselves have seen and judged many sins to be the greatest of evils.

Though Spiritual sins were hid from them, their light was not able to discover Infidelity, and Gospel-sins; yet Moral-sins they have discovered, and have avoided them, and would hazard themselves; nay, and suffer too, rather than they would commit such sins. The examples of Plato, Scipio, Cato, and many others, will clear this.

And all this was discovered by the Glass of Nature, done by Nature; but not by meer Nature fallen, but by Nature well-bus-banded, by Nature improved, by the implantation of Moral Principles, together with Restraining Grace, and other common gifts of the Spirit.

The Greatness of their Hatred against sin, the Greatness of their Care to avoid sin, the Greatness of their Sufferings, rather than they would commit sin, might be enough to discover to us, the Greatness of the Evil of sin. But pass by this.

2. The second Glass, wherein you may see the greatness of sin, is, The Glass of the Law.

A Glass which discovers sin in all its Dimensions; the Guilt, Demerit, Filthiness and Sinfulness of sin. Hence the Apostle, Rom. 7. 7. saith--I had not known sin, but by the Law; that is, I had not known sin so hainous as it is, I had not known sin in the wideness and latitude of it: I had not known the sinfulness of sin, if it had not been for the Law, if the Law had not been a Glass to have discovered sin to me. This discovered sin in its Omgatness. David, Psal. 119. 96--I have seen an end of all Perfection, that is, the Law is exceeding broad, that is, by revealing the compass of sin in proportion to its Wideness and Greatness.

Oh! This will discover to thee more nakedness in one sin, than all the world can cover; more indigency in one sin, than all the

Treasures of created righteousness in heaven and earth are able to supply; more obliquity and injustice in one sin, in a very wandering thought, than all the Deaths of Men, and Annihilations of Angels are able to Expiate.

Search into the Law, and thou shalt discover Thousands of sins which fall under Any One Law of God. Oh! Here is A Glass!

3. Look upon sin in The Glass of the Griefs, Woundings, Peircings, and Sorrows, which the Saints have found,

1. In their Admissions, and first Entrance into the state of Grace.

2. In their Relapsings and Turnings again to folly.

1. For the first: See what Groans, Humiliations, they have indured in their first admissions into an estate of Grace, in Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33. 12. in Paul, Acts 9. in the Converted Jews, Acts 2. 37. when the nails which peirced Christ, now stuck in their hearts, as the arrow in the stags side.

How many of the Saints have there been, who have been cast into a bed of miserable sorrow, lain bed-rid under the stroke of Justice perhaps for many years: And all this for sin. No age is without a Thousand examples of it.

2. Look upon the sorrows and breakings, which the Saints have indured upon their Relapsing into sin. See in Peter, in David: Read what sad expressions he hath in Psalm 6. from vers. 1. to vers. 7. and in Psalm 32. 3, 4, 5 verses. So Psalm 51.

How doth he complain how his--Soul is troubled--his bones are broken--his eyes are consumed with sorrow--his bed swims with tears? And all this for sin---Here is a Glass, wherein you may see the Evil of sin to be the Greatest Evil.

Yea; and the least sin, when God sets it on, will do all this.

4. Look upon sin in Adam, and there see the greatness of it. That one sin of Adam, hath brought All the Miseries, Sickness, Death, &c. upon All his Posterity since that time.

It hath been the Damnation of thousands of millions of men; and still it runs on. Gods justice is still unsatisfied; if it were, there would be a stop: We should Dye no more, Be sick no more, &c.

Oh! Here you may see sin; sin in its Extensiveness.

5. Look upon sin in Christ: See there what Humblings, what Breakings, what Woundings, what Peircings, what Wrath it brought upon Christ himself. It was that, which mingled that bitter Cup, with such woful ingredients; which, had we but sipp'd of it, when it was so tempered, would have laid our souls under more wrath, than all the damned in Hell do suffer. Christ did Bear Pure Justice for sin.

Nay,

Nay, it made him, who was God as well as man, sin defiled by the Spirit to that work, strengthened by the Deity, to sin as drops of blood, and even to struggle, and seem to draw back, and pray against the work of his own Mercy, and to decline the business of his own coming into the world.

Ah! none knows but Christ, nor is a finite understanding able to conceive, what Christ underwent, when he was to bear sin; and with that To wrestle with the infinite wrath and justice of the infinite God; the Terrors of death, and the Powers of the world to come. Here is a Glass, wherein you may see the greatness of sin, The wideness of sin, The guilt of sin, The damnation of sin: All which are set out to the life, in the Death, Sufferings, Bruisings and Woundings of the Son of God.

You, that make light of sin, go to Christ, and ask him, How heavy it was; even that, which you make so light of, which pressed him down to the ground. And the least sin would have pressed thee, and all the pillars of heaven, to the Bottom of Hell for ever.

6. A sixth Glass. Look upon sin in the Damnation of the Soul for ever; that nothing would satisfy the justice of God, but the Destruction of the Creature. No Sickness, no Prison, no Blood, no Sufferings, but the Sufferings of Hell: And those not for a Time, but for Ever. Ah! see here the greatness of sin; which might be further amplified by the consideration of the preciousness of the soul, which yet sin ruins to all eternity. And therefore would you know sin? Quare Damnatus, Ask the damned what sin is. Lay thy Ear to Hell, and hear those Screedings, those Howlings, those Rarings of the Damned. And all this is for sin. Oh they are dear-bought pleasures, which must be thus paid for with everlasting pains.

Thus you see what sin is by all these Glasses. And therefore, Oh! how ought we to be Humbled for our slight thoughts of sin, which is so great an Evil?

Now if it be so, Then see what need we have to aggravate sin to the utmost in our confessions of sin; because all we can say of it, will fall infinitely short of the true greatness of sin. You can aggravate no sin to high, as to make it above itself, as to make sin greater than it is. You can have no multiplying Glasses, to greatness sin above the greatness of sin. You have such Glasses, to make greater other things above their own greatness, which are able to present small things great; mean things, of vast bigness: But you have no Glass to multiply sin, and make sin appear bigger than it is.

The sufferings of the Saints, the sorrows of the Saints; the sufferings

sufferings of the Damned are too short; The Glass of the Law, the Glass of Christs sufferings (which is the greatest) this doth not shew sin greater than it is: It doth but discover sin in its Just Proportions and Dimensions.

It had not been justice in God, to have required more blood, and to put his own Son to more suffering, than sin deserved. Nor would this have stood with Gods Love, his Pity and Mercy to his Son, to have put him to more than sin deserved.

Though now there be mercy more than enough for the greatest sinners; as the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 1. 14. yet there was not Justice more than enough exercised upon Christ for the demerits and guilt of sin.

The Death of Christ was--*Ἀρκὴν λύτρωσιν*--An Adequate Ransome for our souls and sins: And yet there is a Redundancy of merit, an Overflowing of merit in the Satisfaction of Christ, to Ransome a thousand worlds more to that, if need were. As sin is infinite, in regard of the Object; so Satisfaction is infinite, in respect of the Merit.

Hence Christs death is not onely said to be A Satisfaction, but A Purchase; not onely A Payment, but A Purchase.

A Satisfaction it was to the Justice of God for sin, Fall. And A Purchase of all good things from the Mercy of God; to which his Justice, in respect of the Validity and Worth of Christs Satisfaction, is Bound to us. But this by way of Digression.

See then, what need there is, To Aggravate sin to the utmost; because we cannot multiply sin to the greatness of it. There will be many singular fruits of so doing.

1. This will breed shame and confusion of spirit for sin.

2. This will make you advance, and relish mercy better.

When the debt seems little, we are ready, and apt to undervalue a pardon. But, when sin appears exceeding sinful, this doth make us value mercy, prize a pardon.

When sin is seen the greatest Evil, Mercy and Pardon will be apprehended the greatest Good.

3. This puts us into the neerest disposition, To forsake sin. As he, who extenuates sin, is resolved to continue in sin; so he, who truly aggravates sin, desires to be rid of it.

4. Besides, it breeds a Displacement with our selves, when we consider, How ill we have dealt with God.

It produceth self-judging, and self-condemnation: as we see in Davids Psalms.

5. It will produce spiritual softness, and readiness of heart for sin. But this I must pass over.

6. It will produce spiritual softness, and readiness of heart for sin. But this I must pass over.

7. It will produce spiritual softness, and readiness of heart for sin. But this I must pass over.

USE.

U S E.

If sin be the Greatest Evil, Then it is the Greatest Mercy in the world to be rid of sin. The greater the evil is, the greater is the mercy to be rid of it. But now sin is the Greatest Evil.

And therefore you shall see it set down as the only mercy that comes in by Christ, *Mat. 1. 25*--He shall be called *JESUS*, because he shall save his people from their sins.

As if all other things coming in by Christ, were included in this one, He shall save his people from their sins. He doth not say--Hee shall save his people from Hell, &c. but, From sin: From no other evil in the world. And this is the Greatest Mercy.

When God would speak the utmost, even the greatest thought of Mercy, that ever came upon his heart; when he would set down the greatest work of Mercy, that ever the God of Mercy wrought: he saith no more, but, He shall save his people from their sins.

Sin was the utmost Evil; and therefore the saving from sin was the greatest good. And hence David, *Psal 32. 1, 2*. saith--Blessed is he whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered: Blessed is that man, to whom the Lord imputeth not sin.

Indeed, we have mean thoughts, cheap thoughts of pardon of sin; and the reason is, because we have slight thoughts of sin: But, if God once open our understanding, and make us see the vastness and wideness of the evil of sin; and, if that he should joy a feeling sense to that sight, and make us feel what sin is, if he should let but the least sparkle of his wrath fall upon our spirits for sin, it would make our faces gather blackness; we should quickly change our note, and say,--Oh! Blessed, and for ever blessed are they, whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.

But, lest I should seem to Beat the aire, we will therefore Circumstantiate this Mercy a little; and you shall see the Greatness of it.

Though indeed, this were enough, to tell you, that sin is the Greatest Evil: Thence would necessarily follow, That it is the Greatest Mercy in the world, To be rid of sin; which will more fully appear, if we consider the following particulars:

1. First then, The pardon of sin is the dearest-bought Mercy; and that is something to shew the Greatness of the Mercy.

You know, the Greater the sum is, that is to be paid for the Purchase of a thing (provided there be no want of wisdom in the Buyer, nor want of Honesty in the Seller) the Greater still, and of more worth is the Thing bought or Purchased.

But now This Mercy, Pardon of sin, was a Mercy dear-bought; It cost Blood, *Mat. 26. 28*. and that--Not the blood of Bulls and Goats;

Goats, for that it was impossible it should take away sins, as the Apostle hath it, Heb. 10. 4. What then was it? Why it was The Precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. -- You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation; but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and spot. And this, The Blood of God, Acts 10. 28. -- Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood.

Now sit down, and think what a Mercy that must needs be, which is the Price of blood, and that of the Son of God.

There was no Want of Wisdom in the Buyer, he could not be over-reacht, he knew the worth of the Commodity: Nor was there want of justice or goodness in the Seller. He was just, and would not take one drop of blood more than the thing was worth: And he was A Father too, and therefore would not put his Son to more sufferings, and require more than the thing was worth.

2. This is the purest Mercy of all other, The Pardon of sin. A mercy that comes from the Heart and Good-will of God to you.

God may give you all other things, and hate you. You may be Rich, and yet Reprobates; Great in the world here, and be Damned hereafter. Dives may have wealth, Herod Eloquence, Saul Command, Agrippa Glorious Apparel: a man may do wickedly, and yet prosper. These things are not Truly good, nor Truly evil. If good, the wicked should not have them: If evil, the Saints should not have them. These are such things as God reacheth from his Hand, not from his Heart: they are general favors, not special Love.

But this is a Peculiar-Favor, the Saints Peculiar, Pure-Mercy, a mercy that came from the Bowels of mercy, the Heart of Mercy.

3. This is the Freest Mercy of all other, Pardon of sin.

1. There was nothing to ingage God to do it.

2. Nor was there any thing, we could do, to purchase it.

All our Prayers, our Tears, our Services, could not purchase the Pardon of one sin. If for the Active Part we could do as much, and for the Passive part we could suffer as much as all the Saints, put together, have done from the beginning of the world to this day.

If we should weep as many Tears, as the Sea holds drops; if we should humble our selves as many days, as the world hath stood minutes from the creation, &c. All this were Too short to purchase us the Pardon of one sin, though we did all without sin.

But Alas! All that ever we can do, is so far from striking off

off any former score, that we do but set our selves further in debt thereby: So far are we from purchasing a Pardon, that we do but increase our Treason--*Operamur, non in justificationem: sed ex justificatione.*: we must not work, that we may be justified: but we are justified; that we may work:--So that it is the Freest-Mercy.

And therefore in Scripture you read it all attributed to Grace, Tit. 3.7--*We are justified freely by his Grace*--Rom. 3.24.--*Being justified freely by his Grace*,---Rom. 4.5.---*God justifies the ungodly*--There is no motive in us, All is from God. And you shall see it plain, one place for two: In Isa. 43. Verse 23, 24, 25.---*Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, nor hast thou made me drink with the fat of thy Sacrifices: But thou hast made me serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thy iniquities*---I, I, am he, that putteth away thy iniquities, for my own names sake, and will not remember thy sins. Would a man have expected this? this sheweth freeness, when not onely no deservings, (as it is v. 23. and former part of v. 24. *Thou hast not, &c.* but contrary deservings; *Thou hast wearied mee with thine iniquities.* Oh infinite, oh freest mercy. God is mercifull only because hee will bee mercifull.

4 It is an Intituling Mercy: A Mercy that Intitles you to more Good than I am able to express, or you able to conceiye. It is a Mercy, that doth interest you in all other Mercies. It Intitles you to all the Good on Earth, to All the glory of Heaven. Nay, it is a Mercy-making-Mercy. A mercy, that makes all other things Mercy to you.

1. Good things are mercies. Your Riches, your Greatness, your Possessions, your Husbands, your Wives, Children, &c. all these things are no Blessings, till they be joyned with a Pardon; and that makes them all blessings. Nay, not onely Good things: But,

2. Evil things are Mercies to you. Pardon of sin makes Poverty, Afflictions, Sickness, Death it self a Mercy: Like the Unicorn horn, it takes away the venome and posson of every Water: Like the Philosophers-stone, it turns All into Gold. So saith the Apostle--*All things work together for good unto them that love God.* A Sanctified-Cross, is better than an Unsanctified Comfort. A loss in Mercy, is better than an enjoyment in Wrath.

You are never able to make it good, that God doth bestow any thing in mercy, till sin be forgiven. Guile of sin upon you doth turn the nature of things, and makes those things which are good in themselves, evil to you.

3. It is an irrevocable-mercy--God may give in other mercies, and call for them again. Indeed other things are rather lent, than given: Lent Husband, Lent Wife, &c. Hence they are said to be but *Tokens* in our hands, and we *Stewards* of them

for a time. God may call for them when he pleaseth; or he may forfeit them, and lose them.

How often do we forfeit and lose good things, because of our unworthy walking in the enjoyment thereof? *Hos, 2. 8, 9--I will take away my corn in the time thereof; my wine, and my flax in their season. [Mine]* It was Gods. And, would you know the reason? see in the former verse, Because they did not acknowledge him as the giver of them, but bestowed them on *Baal*, as though he had given them.

But now this Mercy is an irrevocable Mercy: A Mercy that God never recalls; A Mercy, God never repents of--The gifts and graces of God are without repentance--And it is a Mercy never forfeited.

We may forfeit the sense of a pardon, we may forfeit the comfort of a pardon; nay, we may forfeit the knowledge of a pardon. I lay, you may sin away the sense, the comfort, the knowledge of a pardon: as it was with *David*.

But we shall never forfeit a pardon--*Quod Scripsi, Scripsi*. If all this foreseen could not hinder God from giving out a pardon; neither can it make God repent of a pardon, when he hath given it.

Now the Stability of the Mercy is that, which adds a great deal of worth to the Mercy. As things that are Evil; so much more things that are good, are heightened from the consideration of the continuance of them, the Stability and Lastingness of them.

Now this is a Stable Mercy. Take but one Place, *Isa. 54. 8, 9, 10---For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: For, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: So have I sworn, that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee! --Yet further--For the mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed: but my kindness shall never depart from thee, nor shall the Covenant of my peace be removed.*

This is the difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. The one, is Temporary; the other, is Eternal. It is a Temporary Covenant, though an Eternal Rule: The other is Eternal, and Immutable.

6. Pardon of sin is an Universal Mercy, the Womb of Mercy, a Productive-Mercy; all other mercies grow upon this Tree of Forgiveness of sin. It is a Tree, the Root whereof is in Christ; and the Fruit thereof are All good things on Earth, and Glory in Heaven. There are seven glorious Fruits of Pardon of sin; which I will but name, and so come to the Last Use.

1. Reconciliation with God, 2 Cor. 5. 19. Admission into his favour. He, who before was an Enemy, is now become thy Friend; for nothing makes God an Enemy, but sin. And such a Friend he is, who will be a Friend in life, a friend in Death, when all other Friends forsake; and a Friend after death.

2. Adoption

2. *Adoption of Children*: which followeth upon our pardon in justification.

3. *Access to God, as to a Father, with childe-like boldness*. Sin was that *μεγαλόν κέντρον*—that great Gulf betwixt God and us. Sin the Partition-wall betwixt God and us: now sin being pardoned, this Partition-wall is taken down, and there is Access to God, and Access with boldness.

4. *Acceptation of our Services*: Till sin be pardoned, there is no Acceptation of any service: Till our persons be accepted and reconcil'd, our performances are abominable: But now sin being pardoned, here is acceptance for all our services. He drinks the milk as well as the wine, Cant. 5.1. And eats the honey-comb with the Honey, &c.

5. *Sanctification of every condition to us*: When sin is removed which was the curse in all.

6. *Supportation under Crosses*: Upon removal of sin, which was in all, the heaviest burden.

7. *Participation of all the priviledges of the Covenant*: These are the inseparable fruits of pardon.

There are other, as *Peace, Joy, Comfort*, Rom. 5.1. which indeed are not so much *Fruits of pardon*, as *Fruits of Assurance of pardon*; not the next, but the remoter fruits of pardon.

U S E.

Lastly, Is sin the *Greatest Evil* in the world? Oh then! let us, Above all things in the world, labour to get our selves rid of sin: Get a pardon of sin. Say with David—Oh! Take away the iniquity of thy servants.

What will the enjoyment of all other goods profit thee, if thy sins be not pardoned? what profit had Dives of his wealth? Saul of his Kingdom? &c.

It is a thing greatly to be lamented to see, How active and serious men are, about removing of other evils on them, and the purchasing and procuring of other goods, but yet how slight, how superficial they are about getting Pardon of sin.

Thy Person is under the Guilt of Sin. Thou standest a *Condemned man and woman*—*Damnatus antequam Natus*. And God hath given thee time, and that time is not a time of *Reprival* onely, but is a time, that God hath afforded thee to get a pardon in.

And it cost no less than the *Blood of Christ*, to procure thee this time, it was that that made a stop of the present proceedings of Gods justice against thee, else thou hadst been in *Hell* long ago.

And wilt thou *Squander away This Time*? wilt thou *Neglect This Business*? wilt thou *eat away, sleep away, nay, drink away, sin away a Pardon*?

If there were a man, condemned to dye, and yet were, out of Mercy, Reprieved, That hee might procure his Pardon, and the King were willing to grant him a pardon; would you not think that man deserves to dy, who shall now spend this time in drinking, in reveling, &c? why this is your case.

But yet there is another sort that will seek for a pardon; but they seek it coldly, they seek it formally, they seek it sleighly and superficially, they seek it as if they had no need of it, as if they could do well enough, though they wanted a Pardon.

There is a great deal of dallying with God, about this Great business. Most men in the World do but Trifle with God about it.

I will name you five or six sorts of men, who are Triflers with God, in this main, and concerning matter; and these, none of the meanest neither. I shall not now deal with your Debaucht People; but such as will seem to do somewhat for a pardon.

1. Such, who will seek, and perhaps cry earnestly; but yet still continue in the practice of those sins, which they beg a pardon of.

I speak not now of Sins of Course, -- *Peccata quotidiana incurfionis*: Sins of daily incurfion: Sins of Infirmitie, weakness and Imperfections in Duty; These the best, notwithstanding their daily praying for pardon of, do yet too often fall into.

But I speak of grosser-sins. -- *Peccata Vastantia Conscientiam*: Sins wounding and gashing the Conscience. And this is a fearfull thing, fearfull dallying with God.

What would you think of such a man, who should come to beg a Pardon; and yet, before the Pardon were given out, should run to commit new acts of Treason? This is thy case.

I see many of you living in a Course of sin; Potting, swilling, swearing. I am ashamed to name them.

Do you pray for a Pardon? Or do you not pray? If you do not pray, you are no better than Atheists. And do you pray for a Pardon, and yet live in the practice of those sins, you beg pardon of? Oh! what fearfull dallying with God is here!

Oh! you little think what a strong tye this is against sin, To pray for the pardon of sin. What? Have you been confessing sin, humbling your souls for sin, begging of Pardon of Sin? And, no sooner turn your backs upon God, but return to Sin? Ah! This is fearfull dallying indeed.

And this is a Fearfull aggravation of Sin; you think to have something come in for your dayes of Humiliation, for your prayers for pardon of Sin; you think there is some good in it. Why: you have begged a Pardon, though you have Sin'd; yet you have prayed, and therefore hope, that notwithstanding your sins, God will hear your prayers.

But

But dost thou live in sin, and confess sin? Dost thou practice sin? and yet pray for pardon of sin? Dost thou commit sin, and yet honorable thyself for sin.

Oh! These are *Great Aggravations of sin*; these add more weight to sin.

Do you think it would be an *Exemption*, or an *Aggravation*, for a Malefactor to beg a pardon, and yet run to the same Rebellion again? would he think this To lessen his sin, because he hath formerly beg'd a Pardon? No certainly, he would look upon this as a *Greater Aggravation*. Why this is thy case.

And this you shall see, was *Israel's spirit*, which was so much displeasing to God, *Jer. 3. 4.*—Thou art my Fatherly, and the Guide of my youth—They gave God good words, compass him about with good expressions. But, saith the Lord, *Thou hast been done, and yet done as much evil as thou couldst, v. 5.*

2. A second sort, who dally with God, are such, who seek the pardon of some sins, but yet keep up the love and liking of others. Thou art, it may be, *Pinched and Troubled for some gross sins*, and thou beg'st a pardon for them; when, it may be, there is some *Running-Issue of corruption within*, which thou *Overlook'st*; some *secret Haunt of Villany*, that thy heart runs out after; which thou canst not leave, which thou hast no minde to part withal.

Oh! Thou vain man! Thou maist cry all thy life, and shalt never get good. Thou maist pray as long as thou wilt: That One sin, kept with love and liking, will Turn all thy prayers into sin. God will never regard the Prayers of a sin-regarding-sinner, *Psal. 66. 18.*—If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: though I should never act it in my life.

Didst thou know the *Tenor of the Covenant of Grace and Mercy*, the *Strictness of the Gospel*, and *Severity of Mercy* it self against sin; thou wouldst see, There were an impossibility of having one sin forgiven, as long as one sin is unforsoaken.

Justification and Sanctification: Gods forgiving, and our forgoing, are equally as large one as the other. As God justifies from the guilt of all sin; so he sanctifies from the Corruption of all Sin.

Grace in God forgives all Sin. And,

Grace in us makes us forgo all Sin: where sin is forgiven, there sin is forsaken.

3. A Third sort, are they, Who seek a pardon of Sin, without sense of Sin; who seek forgiveness of Sin, without remorse for sin: Men, who are never troubled with any sense, with any compunction of heart for sin.

Would you not take it for a dallying with you; if one had greatly offended you, and should come to desire you your forgiveness, without any sense or remorse of it? What do you think God will do?

This is certain—Without blood there is no Remission of Sin, as the

Apostle speaks--Christ was wounded, and thou must be wounded too, before thou hast a pardon--Christ did bleed, and conscience must bleed, before ever he give a pardon.

It was a speech of Bradford--He never left a duty, till, &c.

Will a man in good earnest beg a pardon; who was never attached for Treason, or so much as thoroughly sensible, that he is guilty of it?

4. A Fourth sort, are such, as cry for Forgiveness, but yet never look after their Prayers. Would you not think it a slighting, if a man, who had offended you, should come and beg a pardon; and as soon as he had said a few words to you, should turn his back, and go away, and never expect, nor wait for an answer from you?

Why thus do you deal with God: You put up prayers, but look not after them. He, who begs in earnest, Oh! he will Diligently observe, what Answer, what Return God makes: He will observe what word of Comfort God lets fall, what intimations God will afford to his spirit, and will be exceeding chary of them. As you see Benhadads servants did, 1 Kings 20.31, 32,33. After they had put up their requests, the Text saith--The men did diligently observe, whether any thing would come from Ahab; and did hastily catch at it. So should we do: Come with sackcloth, put up our prayers with remorse; and, when that is done, when we have prayed our prayers, let us wait our prayers, to see what intimations we shall receive from heaven. Thus David, Psal. 85.8.--I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak Peace to his people, and to his Saints, &c. Psal. 5.3--In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and I will look up.

5. A Fifth sort, who dally with God, are they, who follow not their prayers with endeavors to get assurance, that their Sins are pardoned. Who search not into the Covenant of Grace, acquaint not themselves with the Promises of Grace; search not into the Word of Grace, frequent not the Means of Grace: These men dally, who frequent not the Word, Sacraments, &c. and such like Means for the Assurance of Pardon.

A
TREATISE
OF THE
Loves of Christ
TO HIS
SPOUSE.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
And MASTER of C.C.C.



LONDON:
Printed by Robert Ibbitson, for Thomas Parkhurst, and
are to be sold at his Shop over against the Great
Conduit in Cheapside, 1636.

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Printed by Robert Ibbidon, for Thomas Parkhurst, and
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A
TREATISE
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LOVES OF CHRIST
TO HIS
SPOUSE.

CANT. 4. 9.

*Then hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse: Thou
hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes; with one
chain about thy neck.*



Text, which after wee have been some while
in Heaven, wee shall bee able to understand.

Certainly none can speak fully to this Text,
but they who have the full enjoyments of this
Love.

But things that are not possible to bee ex-
pressed, are not totally to bee omitted; and
therefore wee will lanch into the main Ocean. And when wee
are not able to apprehend this love, let us cast our selves in, and
let it comprehend us.

Some things in the General wee premise.

1. For the *Author*, or Penman; it was *Solomon* inspired by the
Spirit of God.

2. For the *Title* of the Book; it is called *The Song of Songs*; or,
a most excellent Song. So it is called for the excellency; and sub-
limity. The doubling of the words declare the excellency. As
when the Scripture speaks of base things, by doubling the words
they are more debased; as it was said of *Cham*, Gen. 9. 25. *A ser-
vant of servants shall hee bee: that is, a vile slave.* So when it speaks
(G 2) of

of good things by doubling the words, it declares the excellency of the thing, *Deut. 40. 17. The Lord your God, is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords.* Thus much for the Title.

3. As concerning the *Matter*, there is difference among Interpreters.

1. *Aben-Exra* a Jewish Rabbini thinks it to bee an History of the Church of God from *Abraham* to *Christ*.

2. Another thinks it to bee an History of the Church from *Christ*, to the freedom of the Church by *Constantine*, a Roman Emperour, who lived in the beginning of the fourth Century.

3. Another makes it contain a propheticall History of the condition of the Church from *David* to the end of the World. And divides the book into these two parts. The Church

1. Under the Law.

2. Under the Gospel.

1. The Church under the Law, from *David* to the death of *Christ*, which is continued from the beginning of the Book, to the sixth verse of the fourth Chapter.

1. As it was from *David* to the Captivity, which saith hee, is contained in the first Chapter, and the two first verses of the second Chapter.

2. As it was in the Captivity, from the second verse of the second Chapter, to the fifteenth verse of the second Chapter.

3. As it was after the Captivity, till the death of *Christ*, the abrogation of the Church under the Law, which continues from the fifteenth verse of the second Chapter, to the sixth verse of the fourth Chapter.

2. And from that, to the end of the Book is contained an History of the Church Evangelical, till *Christ*'s second comming. Of this mind is *Brightman*.

But to leave this, wee think (and with us goes the stream of Orthodox Interpreters) that the subject matter of this Book is a Parabolical History of the mutual loves betwixt *Christ*, and his Church, set down under the persons of the Bridegroom, and his Bride. And thus much of the Book in general. Wee will now draw neerer to our Text.

In the former Chapter we read, how the Church, the Spouse of *Christ* doth declare her exceeding love to *Christ*, and her high appreciations of him, with her earnest desire to enjoy him, whom her soul saw so precious, and that *Christ* might discover to her, how kindly hee took her affection.

In this Chapter hee doth again enter into a singular commendation of the excellency of the Church, declaring also his unfeigned love to her.

The whole Chapter contains these parts.

1. A singular commendation of the Church by *Christ*, which is set down allegorically from the first verse to the fifth, and from the tenth to the fourteenth verse.

2. A

2. A gracious profession of *Christs* love to his Church, from the fifth verse to the tenth.

3. The Churches reply, with *Christs* answer again to her, *vers.* 15, 16, 17.

In the Churches reply, 1. A commendation of her head and Husband, *vers.* 15. 2. An earnest desire, of further communion of his Spirit, and communion with himself, *vers.* 16.

In *Christs* answer there is contained a Promise of his gracious acceptance of such fruits as the Church shall yeeld him, *vers.* 17.

This verse which I have read to you is a branch of the second part. (*scil.*) *The gracious profession of Christ his love to his Church,* of which, if I read no more than this verse, wee see enough set down to astonish and amaze us all.

Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse. *Quid mirum, si regnum calorum vim patitur, &c!* What wonder if the Kingdome of Heaven suffer violence, when the King of Heaven himself suffers violence!

Christ doth here speak in the manner of a Lover, whose heart is exceedingly ravished, and taken with the beauties, vertues, and graces of his Spouse.

Give mee leave to explain the words, and wee come to Doctrine.

1. *Thou hast ravished.* What is meant by that? The expression is great, that the God of Heaven should bee so taken, even to ravishment with his Church and people. And yet let mee tell you, the word speaks more than any expression can utter.

The word is in the Hebrew, *והיא* of which these interpretations.

1. *Aben-Ezra* translates, *rapiisti animam meam*: Thou hast taken away, thou hast stolne away my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse.

2. *Rab. Sol.* *Traxisti animam meam ad te*: Thou hast drawn my heart to thee.

3. *Talmudici prisce.* *Copulasti cor meum cum tuo*: Thou hast coupled my heart to thee; thou hast One-ed my heart: as if hee should say, thou hast so joyned mee, as thou and I have but One heart.

4. Another, *Vulnerasti cor meum*: Thou hast wounded my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse.

5. The seventy, *They* *exciderunt, exciderunt, exciderunt cor meum*: Thou hast unhearted mee; thou hast taken my heart from mee. And here our Translators, *Thou hast ravished my Heart.* All which laid together, they are mighty expressions, setting down, to wonder and amazement, the exceeding love of *Christ* to the Church.

Thou hast ravished, wounded, stolne away, drawn my heart to thee.

2. My

2. *My Sister, my Spouse.*] Wee will joyn them both together: both are spoken of the same person, the Church of God, which Christ calls, כְּלִי חַיִּים:

1. *Sister*, Because shee is the Daughter of his Father in Heaven, and fellow-heir of Glory with Christ.

2. *Spouse*, Because Christ had married himself unto her.

3. *With one of thine eyes: with one chain of thy neck.*] Not to postil on them.

1. *With one of thine eyes; with one chain, i. e.* with thy Graces, thy Wisdome, and Knowledge, thy Faith, and other Graces: As if hee had said; *I need not to behold both thine eyes:* the beauty of one of them is so great, it takes my heart. And *I need not to behold all thine Ornaments:* even one chain alone hath taken my heart, and drawn my heart to thee. Christ hath an high account of the least of his peoples Graces.

Thus having explained the words, wee come to the conclusions. *Thou hast ravished my heart.*]

Doff. 1. 1. *That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and people. Thou hast ravished.*

Doff. 2. 2. *That which doth so indeare the Heart of Christ to them, that which takes the Heart of Christ, is the beauties and graces of his people.*

Doff. 3. 3. *The least Grace of his Church, doth greatly take the Heart of Christ. One Eye, one Chain.*

Wee think hee cannot love us, wee are so weak in Grace: but it is his own, though never so weak, and hee can love; wee will fall upon the first of these.

Doff. 1. *That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and People.* In the prosecution of this wee will shew,

1. What is meant by his Heart being taken.

2. Wee will shew that Christ's Heart is thus taken.

3. Wee will shew upon what grounds his Heart is so much taken with his Church, and so come to apply.

For the first, What is meant by his Heart being taken?

And here I must tell you in the entrance, that wee cannot sufficiently express it. It is one of the highest expressions in the Book of God towards his Church, that the Heart of Jesus Christ should be taken with his Church.

An expression, which if wee but let lye upon our spirit, the weight thereof would sink us; shall I say, hee doth dearly and entirely love us; nothing is too much to do, nothing is too great to suffer, nothing too much to give to us, hee doth exceedingly love us.

Shall I say, his heart doth exceedingly delight in us, his soul doth exceedingly rejoyce over us, above all the World.

Shall I say, wee are exceeding precious in his eyes, wee are choice

choice in his esteem, *1/a. 42. 3, 4.* such as he will give the World for, such as hee will give himself for, if hee can but gain us, hee esteems hee hath riches enough, and reward enough for it.

Shall I say, his desires are towards us, hee in a manner desires no more than us. Shall I say hee thinks himself happy in the enjoyment of us, wee are reward enough for all his pains, and all his labour.

Why all this and more the Scripture saith, and all this is yet short of this expression, *his Heart is taken with us.*

This, the next particular will give us further insight into.

2. That the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken, I may demonstrate to you by diverse arguments.

That which the thoughts are taken up withall, that the heart must needs bee taken withall.

This is plain, you know a man will busie his thoughts about that which hee cares for: wouldst thou know what thou lovest, see what thy thoughts are upon. As if hee had said, there can bee no better character to discover what your hearts are taken withall, than to examine what your thoughts are most taken up withall, for what the thoughts are taken up withall, the heart is taken withall. Now the thoughts of Christ are exceedingly taken up with his Church and people: Wee are ever upon his thoughts.

There hath not been a moment from all eternitie wherein wee have been out of the thoughts of Christ.

Before the World was, wee were on his thoughts, hee thought on us to everlasting life, loved us with everlasting love.

After wee had lost our selves, wee were then on his thoughts, when hee interposed himself between God and us, to stay his wrath from us.

Before wee came into the World wee were on his thoughts, witness all the Scripture, in which are such expressions of his heart to us. After hee came into the World, you see wee were the whole of his thoughts, wee lay ever upon his heart, you see by his doings, sufferings, prayer for us. Read the *14. 15. 16. 17.* of *John*. See how his thoughts were taken up with us, when hee was to leave us, what love hee shewed, what care hee expressed to us, what earnest prayers hee put up to God for us, read *John. 17.* to the end of the chapter. Yea and what provision hee made for us, hee would not leave us comfortless, but send his Spirit to comfort us, to guide us.

And now hee is in Heaven, are not his thoughts on us? did hee not tell us hee went to prepare a place for us, hee went to do our work, to intercede for us, to plead for us.

The Church of Christ is never a moment off from the thoughts of Christ, *1/a. 49. 15. 16.* And therefore *his Heart is exceedingly taken with his Church.*

That which a man doth affectionately and indearably love, that the heart

Vis nolle quod
ames, attende
quod cogitas.
Bern.

heart is much taken withall, bee it Husband, bee it Wife, Child, the World, whatever.

Now Christ doth exceedingly love his Church, wee are said to bee the dearly beloved of his soul, *Fer. 12. 7.* and read here, hee loves us beyond all expressions, so *God loved the World, Joh. 3. 16.* so Christ hee loves us beyond all conceptions, *Ephes. 3. 19.* it is a love which passeth knowledge.

In the former verse the Apostle went about to measure this love, height, depth, breadth, length.

But hee found his line too short, his measure would not reach, therefore hee concludes it a love beyond all knowledge.

A man may express much love, but hee may conceive of more than hee can express. Why this love of Christ is above all wee can conceive, above knowledge. It is an infinite love. It is, I say, an infinite love, which is more than if I should lay all the bowels in the Creature together, &c.

A greater love than all. Witness what is done, suffered; and yet love above all. And therefore *Christs Heart is exceedingly taken with his Church and People.*

That which a man doth glad his heart with, and which hee rejoyces over, hee must needs bee taken with.

A man will not rejoyce over the enjoyment of that hee loves not. The rich Fool rejoyced over his full Barns, but it was because his heart was taken with his possessions.

Joy is a fruit of the hearts being taken with any thing; you rejoyce in your riches, Husbands, &c. in the possession of what ever your heart loves.

Now the Heart of Jesus Christ doth exceedingly rejoyce over his Church and People, they are his by donation, God gave them to him; they are his by purchase; hee laid down his life for them; if wee lay down our life to compass a thing sure wee rejoyce in it.

Wee are his Riches; wee his Treasure; his *Ammites, Rubams, and Hephzibah's*, his precious ones; his People; his Spouse; and therefore hee must needs rejoyce over us, *Isa. 62. 4, 5. Thou shalt bee called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee*; yea as the Bridegroom rejoyceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoyce over thee, *Zeph. 3. 17. The Lord will rejoyce over thee with Joy, hee will rest in his love; hee will joy over thee with singing.* And therefore seeing Christ doth rejoyce. Ergo is the Heart of Jesus Christ exceedingly taken, &c.

That which a man doth delight to converse withall, that his heart is taken withall.

Now Christ doth delight exceedingly to converse with his Saints; hee loves to speak to them; and hee loves to hear them speak to him, *Cant. 2. 14. Oh my Dove, let mee see thy countenance, let mee hear thy voice, for thy countenance is comely, and thy voice is sweet.* When the Disciples are talking of him, Christ joyes himself

self to them. *Ergo is the Heart of Christ much taken.*

When the two were going to *Emmaus*, Luk. 24. 15. Christ comes and joyne with them, delights in their talk, *Mal. 3. 16.* when Gods people were gathered together, *the Lord hearkened and heard.*

5. That which a man thinks nothing to dear for, nothing too much to give for, to do for, or suffer for, that the heart must needs bee taken withall.

But thus it was with Christ to his Church.

1. Hee suffered in his Body, those spittings, buffetings, scourgings, &c. that was dear to him, which hee gave his heart blood for.

2. Hee suffered in his soul even the wrath of God for her.

3. Hee emptied himself of his own glory, took upon him the form of a servant, with all our infirmities; penal, not culpable, as it is said of *Jacob*, hee counted all his labours but little for *Rachel*, because hee loved her, *Gen. 29. 20.*

6. That which a mans soul is satisfied and contented withall in the injoyment of it, that a mans heart is taken withall.

If a mans heart were not taken with the love of a thing, hee would never think himself happy, never bee contented and satisfied with the injoyment of it. Whereas on the contrary, where the soul is filled with satisfaction in the injoyment of it (what ever it bee) the heart is taken with it.

Now you shall see that the Heart of Jesus Christ is fully satisfied and contented with the injoyment of his Church, though it have cost him so much pains, so much sweat and blood, yet the injoyment of it is reward enough to him. It is the reward which God promised him for his work, *Psal. 2. 8. Ask of mee, and I will give thee the Heathen, &c.* here, merit of mee, lay down thy life, and I will then give thee a Church, a People. And that which doth satisfie, *Isa. 53. 11. Hee shall see of the travel of his soul and bee satisfied;* hee shall see the fruit of his sufferings in the saving of souls, and shall bee satisfied with it. It shall bee reward enough to him for all pains that souls are saved, *Isa. 62. 11. his reward is with him, and his work before him, hee is the salvation of his people.*

And this is that which some think is meant by the joy set before him, in *Heb. 12. 2. Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the shame.*

Which Joy (saith an holy and learned Interpreter) is nothing else but the fruit of his sufferings, the redemption and salvation of his Church and People, according to that in *Isa. 53. 12. Therefore will the Lord divide him a portion with the great, and hee shall divide the spoil with the strong, because hee hath poured out his soul unto death.*

And it is an Interpretation may bee backed.

Well then, seeing whatever the heart of man rests satisfied in the

injoyment of, the heart is taken withal.

And that Christ doth rest satisfied in the injoyment of his Church and People, though it cost so much to obtain it. *Ergo* needs must it follow that *the Heart of Jesus Christ is exceedingly taken.*

That which a man is exceeding chary of, dear of, his heart must needs bee taken with, those things which take our hearts, wee are exceeding dear and chary of them.

If it bee the World, Husband, Wife, Child, a man is exceeding chary of them. *Deal gently with the young man Absolom,* 2 *Sam.* 18. 5. his heart was taken with him, and hee was chary of him.

Now Christ is exceeding chary over his Church: Oh! it is dear to him, therefore hee gives charge to the World, touch not one of these, you touch the apple of mine eye, offend not one of these little ones, they are dear to mee, hee is chary over them.

Yea hee doth not only charge, but menace too, and threatens men if they shall hurt any of his little ones.

It had been better for you, that a Millstone were tyed about your necks, and cast into the middle of the Sea, than to offend any of these little ones.

Christ is exceeding chary over his Church and People, they are dear to him.

Take a taste of it, *Joh.* 18. 8. when hee himself was in that Agony, and when hee suffered himself to bee hailed before the Judges, and to dye, yet you see how chary hee was over his Disciples; why saith Christ, *I am hee you seek for, if therefore you seek mee, let these go their way:* As if hee had said, I am hee whom you seek, and against whom your malice goes forth, do what you will with mee, but spare these, let these go (what have these done?) with *Jonah*, cast mee into the Sea, that the storm may cease, nail mee on the Crois, fling mee into the grave, do with mee what you will, that these may escape.

Oh! Christ must needs bee chary of them, when hee would put his back between his Church and the stripes, interpose his soul between the wrath of God and them.

Drink of that bitter cup that they might not taste of it, bee wounded that they might bee healed, bear the curse, that they might carry away the blessing, as there was no sorrow to his sorrow, so no love to his love, all loves are lost, nay, seem hatred in comparison of his.

Another place, *John* 7. 9. to the 16. see there when he was to go from them, how chary hee was over them, he commends them to his Father, and desires him to keep them whom hee had given him. As if hee had said, Father they are mine, and I love them dearly, I have done much for them, but I will do more, therefore preserve them, therefore keep them.

I am no more in the World, but these are in the World, holy Father, through thine own name keep those whom thou hast given mee; thus you

you see how chary Christ was over them. And therefore his heart is exceedingly taken with his Church.

Hee will keep them from trouble, hee will buy out their trouble with the troubles of the whole World, and their lives with the lives of thousands; you have a place for this, *Isa. 43. 3, 4.* I will give Egypt for thy ransom, I will give Ethiopia and Seba for thee. God will give whole Kingdomes for his Church to preserve them from trouble. *Isa. 43. 3, 4.* I will give Egypt for thy ransom, I will give Ethiopia and Seba for thee. God will give whole Kingdomes for his Church to preserve them from trouble. As if hee had said; I stand not at a give the heads of a thousand men, the lives of ten thousands to save thy life; to preserve thee. The Raine to save *Isa. 43. 3, 4.* Hee is chary of them, if not to keep them from trouble, yet to support them in trouble.

Hee is chary of them, hee will deliver them out of trouble, hee will not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest.

Though for a time, yet, *Isa. 43. 3, 4.* many are the troubles of the righteous, but hee knows how to deliver his, and reserve the wicked. If Christ do not deliver thee from trouble, yet hee will deliver thee in trouble, and at last hee will deliver thee out, who knows how to deliver his when thou art, &c.

That which a man thinks all too little, nothing too much, too dear to bestow upon, that the heart of a man is exceedingly taken withall.

Where all the expressions that a man can lay out do fall short of his affections to it, it is a sign the heart is much taken with such a thing.

When a man thinks not riches, nor labour, nor his blood, this life too dear, this shews the heart is much taken with it.

Now the Church is so dear to Christ, that hee thinks nothing too dear, nothing too much for it.

It was not his blood within his veins, nor his life within his breast, which hee counted too dear for her.

Hee can be seem to bestow any thing on her.

Hee will bestow temporals on her, at least so much as is necessary for her. All things necessary for life, godliness, hee gives himself, how much more all things *Isa. 43. 3, 4.* hee will bestow the greater, and deny the less. That love which gave the greater, will not deny thee the less, as it were good for thee, so much hee hath engaged himself by Covenant to give thee, so to bear thy charge to Heaven, and then there is no want.

The Lions shall hunger and suffer pain, &c. Hee bestows Grace on thee, and Faith is more precious than Gold. Hee will bestow out words on thee, and yet his heart never taken with thee. Dives had more wealth, uttered more eloquence, said more command, Agrippa more glorious apparel, than those his heart is taken withall.

Hee may give Wealth to a Dives, Command to a King, Bloquence to a Herod.

habitu sua quod non derelinit se.

But hee never bestows Grace on any, but it is an evidence his heart is taken with a man.

As *Abraham* gave portions to the sons of the *Canaanites*, but *Isaac* had the inheritance.

Hee will bestow his Spirit on thee, to enlighten, renew, &c. Hee will bestow himself on thee, the collection of all other blessings. God cannot extend his love further in giving, nor wee ours in desiring. And that which a man bestows himself upon, must needs bee precious in his eyes. Christ doth bestow himself on thee.

Who is the *summum genus* of gifts, the gift of gifts. The gift which doth include us, to all other gifts, all is yours, if you bee Christs.

The gift which sweetens and sanctifies all other. Like the *lilicorns* horn takes away the venome and poison of all other. There is a curse with all other gifts if Christ bee not given.

A curse to your Gold, your Silver, your Prosperity, your Meat, Drink, Health, and Strength.

But where Christ is given, hee takes off the curse, sanctifies all, hee doth not only turn comforts into blessings, but crosses into blessings.

A blessing is sickness, in poverty, in death, &c. Christ bestows himself upon his Church, hee doth pass over himself, and all his by deed of gift, hee and all his is yours. As you and all yours are his, your sins, and forfeits all his.

And all his are yours, his merits, his Spirit. As Christ said to the Father, so may yee to Christ, all thine is mine, his merit, cloathing, his blood, drink, flesh, meat. Hee is meat, drink, cloaths. Christ doth not stay here, but hee bestows Heaven upon his Church. It is the Mannor house which hee hath reserved for his Spouse. *Father, I will plant choise vines, thou hast given mee, may bee where I am, &c. Joh. 17. 24.*

They are married together, and co-habitation is a marriage duty, &c.

As *Abraham* had two houses for his Spouses.

And therefore seeing Christ thinks nothing too dear, to bestow upon his Church, hence must needs follow, That the Heart of *Jesus Christ* is exceedingly taken with his Church.

1. Those which Christ hath made all things for, to serve for the good of them.

2. Those whom hee hath prepared Glory for, Heaven for.

3. Those which hee hath shed his blood for, must needs bee dear to him, his Heart much taken with them.

If a King should build a stately house, for one, with whom hee would solace himself all his life, and should at last give life too, you would think sure hee loved him.

4. God made all for thee, the Sun, Moon, Stars, Creatures;

all this frame of the World, sure you are dear to him.

2. God prepared Heaven for thee, a place of Glory, Happiness, where thou shouldest for ever enjoy him, and solace thy self with his love.

3. Christ shed his blood for thee, which was more dear to him than ten thousand Worlds. What is all the World, and ten thousand Worlds in comparison of one drop of his blood? and therefore they whom hee shed his blood for, must needs bee more dear to him than all the World; his Heart is taken with them.

Thus far now wee have gone in the breaking up the *Will* of Christ's Love, the sent whereof hath cheered and revived us. Wee will now proceed to the farther discoveries of it, and that is, to the third thing wee propounded, *Why the Heart of Christ is so much taken with his Church and People.*

Wee will but give you these three grounds, all which are taken not from us, but from himself, his own mercy. In brief, Either

From his own Grace to us; Or

From his own Grace in us.

The first Ground or Reason, why the Heart of Christ is so taken, is,

1. Because wee are his. Propriety you know is the great ground of love. Wee love our own, our own Husbands, Wives, Children: They are ours, wee have propriety in them. So here, wee are His. Hee hath propriety in us, and therefore loves us. Cant. 7. 10. The Spouse makes the same argument. *I am my Beloveds, and hee is mine: therefore his desire is towards mee;* therefore his heart is taken with mee, therefore his soul loves mee. And wee are his, in the dearest and sweetest relations.

1. Wee are his People, his Subjects. *Christ is the King of Saints*, whose throne is in our hearts, and will brook no Rival: whose Scepter is his Word, and whose Word is our Law. Nay, least this bee too little.

2. Wee are his Friends. Henceforth I call you not Servants, but Friends. Wee are his Friends and Favourites. Nay,

3. Wee are his Children, begotten again, and born again to everlasting life, 1 Pet. 1. 3. 4. *Being born again, &c.*

4. Wee are his Spouse, such as hee hath married to himself in faithfulness and truth, and such as hee delights in.

5. Wee are his Members. The Church is his Body, his fulness, and every one Members in particular, as the Apostle speaks.

6. Wee are his Jewels, his Treasure. Mal. 3. 7. *In the day that I make up my Jewels, they shall bee mine.* And therefore his heart must needs bee taken with us. Christ hath the same argument. *Where the Treasure is, there will the heart bee also.* The Heart, and a mans Treasure lye together. Now wee are his Jewels, his Treasure, his Portion, his Inheritance, that which his Father left him; and hee must

Amat Deus
non aliunde
hoc habet; sed
ipse est unde a-
mat; et ideo ve-
hementius a-
mat. Quia homo
non potest esse
sine deo: hoc
est ipse Deus.

Cant. 7. 10.
I am my Beloveds,
and hee is mine:
therefore his desire
is towards mee;
therefore his heart
is taken with mee;
therefore his soul
loves mee. And
wee are his, in the
dearest and sweetest
relations.

ubi thesaurus
est, ibi cor
est. Bern.

must dearly earn it, too. And therefore the Heart of Christ is exceedingly taken with his Church and People. So you see this is the first ground, why, because wee are his; and his in the dearest, nearest, choicest of Relations.

To be brief, wee are his these four wayes. Wee are his

1. *By Choice.* Hee set his heart on us from everlasting, which was his first love; and that which hath earned God through all the expressions of his mercy towards us, to this day, even to admiration of Angels, and astonishment of men. These were his primitive, his bosome-thoughts to us, his first love, which is most dear and precious. As the first love of the Creature to the Creator is most precious in Gods esteem: the Virgin-love of the soul to God, those affections the soul hath, when first enamoured with God. Therefore hee tells the Children of Israel:

Hee remembred the time of her Espousals, the kindness of her youth. That will not out of his mind, *Jer. 2. 2.* So the first love of the Creator to the Creature, his bosome-thoughts, they are most precious. Oh! these take the heart; these are the fairest, these are his freest thoughts towards us, *2 Tim. 1. 9.* All the World stood before him, from the first man to the last. And why hee should chuse us, and pass by others; others finer peeces of Clay than wee are: others of greater parts, greater abilities: which if it had pleased God to have conquered to himself, might have brought him far more glory, done him more service. Here was only his free mercy. There was no ground to make him chuse us, before hee loved us: but there is some ground to cause him to love us, now hee hath chosen us. Wee are his, and his by free choice, chosen and singled out of a world of men. And therefore will hee love us.

2. Wee are his *By Purchase.* Hee hath bought us, and that at a dear rate, with the price of his own blood, *Gal. 4. 5.* Christ was made under the Law, that kee might buy out those, who were under the Law. Hence, *1 Cor. 6. 20.* You are bought with a price. And what was the price? It could not bee too little for the meanness of the commodity, not worth owning when hee had it. But it cost him his dearest Hearts-blood, as *1 Pet. 1. 18.* Wee were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, without spot. So then wee are his by Purchase, wee are the fruits of all his pains, of all his doings and sufferings; wee are the commings in which Christ had for his Blood, wee are his Purchase. God did covenant and bargain with Christ, that if hee would lay

Non quis nos
delexit
Deum, sed quia
iple prior di-
lexit nos, deni-
qi dilexit,
etiam non ex-
istentes, sed &
resistentes,
iuxta Pauli te-
stimonium,
quoniam cum
adhuc inimici
essemus recon-
ciliati sumus
Deo, per mor-
tem Christi fi-
lii eius. Bern.
in Cant.
Vox egypto-
rum.

lay down his life and blood for a people, hee should have them: which you see in *Psal. 2. 8. Ask of mee, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance*, that is, faith one, merit of mee, lay down thy life and blood, and thou shalt have a people: as you see in *Isa. 53. 11, 12. Hee shall see of the travel of his soul.*

That if hee would dye, wee should live; if hee would bear the curse, wee should have the blessing. If hee would bear that wrath our sins deserved, and interpose himself between the Justice of God and us, the quarrel should bee taken up; God would bee at peace. If hee would purchase us, hee should enjoy us. And Christ hee undertook this. Hee loved us; and seeing hee could not have us, except hee did buy us; and could not buy us, except hee gave his blood for us; and as it were sell himself to the justice of God, that hee might buy us out: *Hee was content to do it.* Hee redeemed us, not with silver or gold, &c. And now being purchased by him, his by *Purchase*, and so dear a *Purchase*, his heart must needs bee taken with us. Indeed hee bought us, because hee loved us: and now hee loves us, because hee hath bought us. If wee did lay down our blood, our life for the purchase of a thing, and could after live to enjoy it, how exceedingly would our hearts delight in it! Christ hath given his blood, and laid down his life for the purchase of his Church and People; and hee lives to enjoy his purchase; and therefore the Heart of Christ must needs bee taken with it.

Shall I tell you? You are all the delight which Christ hath in the World: Hee delights to see you; hee delights to bee with you; hee delights to converse with you; and all the delights of Christ are taken up with you; hee hath nothing worth beholding but you, in the World.

3. Wee are his *By Donation*. God hath given us to him; *Joh. 6. 37. All that the Father hath given mee, shall come unto mee; Joh. 17. 9, 11, 12. I pray not for the World, but for them whom thou hast given mee.* -- *Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given mee.*

Wee were so bought, as yet wee were given: else where is Gods *Mercy*? and so given, as yet wee were bought: else where is his *Justice*? Gods armes are equal; in the length of the one, you have the measure of the other: and therefore hee did so expresse his *Mercy* to man, as withall hee did preserve his *Justice*. They were so given, as yet bought; and so bought as yet given.

And being his by *Donation*, God having made them over to Christ by *Deed of Gift*, being the full desire of Christ, hence the Heart of Christ is taken with them.

4. Wee are his *By Covenant*, *Ezek. 16. 8. Then I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.* Christ became ours, wee his: Hee is our King, and wee his People: hee is our Husband, and wee his Spouse: hee hath given himself to us; and wee have

have re-given our selves to him: wee his delight, hee ours. And being his in Covenant, in mutual stipulation, and bargain, the Heart of Christ is taken with us.

2. Because shee is *adorned with his beauties*. Shee is beautifull, *Cant. 4. 1. Cant. 6. 4, 10.*

There is a twofold beauty which Christ doth communicate to his Church, which makes the Church lovely in his eyes.

1. *The beauties of his Righteousness.*

2. *The beauties of his Holiness and Graces.*

But these are not communicated the same way.

The one is communicated to us

By Imputation.

The other

By Emanation, or Infusion.

The one a Beauty,

Imparted.

The other,

Imputed.

1. Christ doth communicate to his Church his *Imputed Beauty*, then 2. His *Righteousness*, wherewith hee cloaths our souls. Hence Hee is called *Jehovah-our-Righteousness*. And is said to bee made *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*. And wee to *put on Christ*.

Now this Righteousnesse Christ doth communicate to us by *Imputation* making it ours, as if we in our own perions had wrought it. And it is as truly ours to save us, to justifie us, as it is his to glorifie him. And God looking upon us through *Christ*, and *Christ* looking upon us in himself, as cloathed with his Righteousness, hee beholds us beautifull. *Hee sees no iniquity in Jacob, nor transgression in Israel*. Not but that there was iniquity in *Jacob*, but God did not see it; God looked on him as cloathed with the Righteousnesse of *Christ*, and so is said, not to see it.

As the Sun shining through a red glasse upon a wall, the wall looks red: not that this colour is inherent in it, but relucient upon it: So God looking on us through *Christ*, doth behold us Righteous in his Righteousness; not that this is inherent in us, or beheld in us; as the Papists charge us, but *quoad gratiosum Dei conspectum*, wee are rather beheld in it.

I am not ignorant, there are some, besides Papists, that deny the imputation of *Christs* Righteousnesse, and say too much with them, *Iustitiam Christi imputari commentum est*, and call this imputative Righteousnesse, an imaginary and fancied Righteousnesse.

Iustitiam putativam.

I wish they would consider that wee say.

Wee say there is a twofold Righteousnesse in *Christ*.

1. *His essential and personal Righteousness*, as God.

2. *His Mediatory Righteousness*, wrought as *Mediator*.

The

The first of these cannot bee imputed to us; it is essential, but the latter of these (*Justitia Mediatoria*) his Mediatory Righteousness, or that Righteousnesse hee wrought for us as *Mediator*, whereby hee did subiect himself to the *Precepts*, to the *Penalties*, *Commands*, and *Curses*; answering both Gods *vindictive* and *rewarding Justice*; This is communicated to us, and made ours, by vertue of which wee stand *recti in curia*, justified in Gods sight, which is the first beauty *Christ* adorns his Church withall.

2. A second beauty wherewith *Christ* adorns his Church, and makes her lovely, is, The *Beauties of his Graces*; which may bee called the *Beauties of Holiness*, and set forth to us by those *Bracelets*, and *chains*, Ezek. 16. 9. and here by *one Chain*, &c. which is communicated to us, by way of *Infusion*, or *Emanation*, whereby *Christ* by his Spirit, doth derive from himself as the *universal Principle*, and *common stock of Grace*; *Grace for Grace*, according to that, *Joh. 1. 16. Of his fulness wee have all received Grace for Grace.*

I know there are many interpretations of this. *Chrysostome*. The Gospel for the Law, because it follows, *The Law came by Moses.*

Others, *Gratiam, super Gratiam*, or *Gratiam gratia accumulata*, one grace to another, or abundance of Grace.

But this I conceive the meaning. For every Grace that is in *Christ*, there is some Grace communicated to us answerable to it, in some proportion. As the Child in Generation receives from the Parents member for member, or as the Paper from the Presse, letter for letter, or the Glasse from the face, image for image; or the Wax from the Seal, stamp for stamp: so wee from *Christ*, *Grace for Grace.*

There is no Grace in *Christ* appertaining to our sanctification in general, which is not in some weak degree fashioned in us. And hence the work of Grace and Regeneration is called a *forming of Christ* in the soul. And whiles wee behold him, wee are said to bee *changed into his likeness*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. And wee are said to have the *same Spirit in us*, that is in *Christ*, Rom. 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, hee is none of his.* And the *same Mind* is in us, that is in *Christ*, Phil. 2. 6.

There is a bastardly holiness, a painted false beauty, which is spun out of our selves, wrought out of our own Principles, with which wee shall lye down with sorrow at last. Sparkles of our own kindling.

But the true holiness flows from *Christ*, and is imparted from *Christ* to his Church, whereby shee is beautifull with his beauties, adorned with his Graces. And being thus, the Heart of *Jesus Christ* must needs bee taken with her.

Thus you see the second Reason, why the Heart of *Christ* is so much taken. *Because shee is adorned with his Beauties, clothed with his Righteousness, adorned and beautified with his Graces*; which ingather the Heart of *Jesus Christ*.

Hee that loved us in our own blood, cannot chuse but love us, as

wee have his beauty put upon us, hee cannot but love himself, and delight in himself, where-ever hee doth behold himself: why these beauties are peecees of himself, part of his beauty, his rayes wherewith hee himself is adorned. And hee cannot look upon any soul cloathed with his Righteousness, and beautified with his Graces, but his heart is exceedingly taken with them, *Cant. 6. 4, 5. Turn away thine eyes from mee, for they have overcome mee. Christ seems as not able to bear the view of such a beauty. Turn away thine eyes, &c.*

2. Because they are the persons, upon whom God intended to advance the great design of glorifying the *Riches* and *Freeneſs* of his *Grace* and *Mercy*.

Now those whom God hath intended for so great purposes, as these are, which are the *greatest Purposes* that ever came upon his heart, his heart must needs bee taken withall. You know the more glorious and excellent the *End* to which any thing serves, the more precious is that *thing* in our eyes. Now wee serve for no other *End*, but the expression of his *Mercy*, the advancement of the *Glory* of his *Free-Grace*, which are *Ends* as high as himself, *Purposes* as great as himself.

And therefore God is not only taken with the expression of it, but with the persons upon whom hee doth expresse it. Therefore *I say is the Heart of God so exceedingly taken with his Church.*

Indeed God may single out some men for the purposes of expressing the glory of his *Power* and *Justice*, the advancement of them, and yet God hate the men, as you see it plain in *Pharaoh*, who for this cause was set up to advance his *Power*. But God never singled out any to bee the subjects on whom hee doth intend to advance the *Riches of his Grace and Mercy*, but his Heart is exceedingly taken with them.

Those, who serve to such high purposes as these, and are designed to such high ends as these; *The advancement of the Glory of his Grace and Free-Mercy* (which is the most precious attribute of God, and which some think is called his *Glory*, *Exod. 33. 18. Let mee see thy Glory,*) and if the 19. verse may interpret it, that *Glory* was his *Mercy*, and his *Mercy* his *Glory*, and therefore such must needs bee precious in his esteem.

Now his People are they, whom God hath singled out for these great purposes, for the *Expression* of more *Mercy*, than wee can *express*, nay, than wee can *conceive*, nay, than wee can *believe* at all times, but weakly at best.

And therefore *the Heart of Jesus Christ must needs bee taken with them.*

My Brethren, If God had not singled out some to express himself thus upon, God had not been *known in the World*; for there is nothing so much reveals God to bee God, as his *Mercy* and *Grace*.

And therefore God singled out a few upon whom hee would ad-

advance the riches of his Grace, that his Mercy, and in that himself might bee made known in the World.

As Paul saith of himself, *1 Tim. 1: 16.* that hee obtained Mercy, that hee might stand up a Pattern of all long-suffering. As if hee had said. Wee should not have known how patient God is, wee should not have apprehended how long-suffering God is to sinners, if hee had not had such an example of patience, such a pattern of all long-suffering, as I was: So wee should not have known how Mercifull, how Good God is, if the choicest attribute of God had been lost to us, like as if a great River had run under ground not discerned; if God had not singled out some, upon whom hee might have expressed the Riches of his Mercy.

And those whom God doth intend to bee the subjects upon whom hee may advance so high designs, so great purposes, must needs bee exceeding precious to him.

My Brethren, you that are the People of God, are such as hee hath intended to advance his Mercy, and Glory of Free-Grace upon; You are they hee sent Christ to dye for, the greatest work that ever was wrought in the World. You are they whom hee reared the fabrick of Heaven for. You are they in whom hee intends to delight, and with whom hee will solace himself for ever.

And God looks upon us now, not as wee are, but what he intends to make us. Hee sees to the utmost of his design on you, to eternity, and loves you now with that love.

If God should look upon us, as wee are, hee might see enough in us, to withdraw his heart from us: or if not, yet enough to cool and quench his affections towards us, being there is so much blacknesse with our beauty, so much deformity with our comlinessse, so much corruption with our Graces: Nay, so much blacknesse, and so little beauty, and so much corruption, and so little Grace.

But hee looks upon us, not as wee are in our selves, but as wee are in Christ, and not what wee are for present, but what hee intends to make us in Christ. Hee looks to the end of his design, even to that which hee hath designed us to. -- When wee shall bee presented without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: holy, and without blemish, Ephes. 5. 27. -- When wee shall bee satisfied with his likeness, Psal. 17. 15. -- When wee shall bee ἱεράγιοι, like to the Angels; nay, like unto God, Glorious with his Glory, as now Gracious with his Grace.

And therefore God having intended us to such high purposes, and looking upon us for present, what hee purposes to make us, and what hee hath designed us to; needs must the Heart of Jesus Christ bee taken with us.

Thus having shewed you, what it is to have the Heart of Christ taken with the Church, and proved unto you that the Heart of Christ is thus taken with it, and given you the grounds and rea-

sons of it; I will now descend to application;

If so bee, that *the Heart of Jesus Christ be taken with his Church and People*: Then from hence wee may deduce these *Confessaries*.

1. Confessary.

1. This then may bee a ground for us to expect, and hence our Faith may bee strengthened in the expectation, that *Christ* will yet do more for his Church and People, than yet hee hath done.

Indeed hee hath done much for *our Nation*, for *our English Sion*.

Hee might have ruined us, for a Generation of such as provoked him. Wee have been a *Provocation of his Anger* to this day. Hee might have suffered our carcases to have fallen in the *Wilderness*, and kept our posterity to have entered into *Capaim*. Wee have looked toward *Egypt*, toward *Babylon*. Hee might have laid the foundation of purer times in our bloud, raised up a purer Church upon the ruines of us.

But God hath seemed to over-look our great unworthiness: And to the terror of our enemies, and even to the astonishment and wonder of us all, hath begun, set forth, and gone forward in a way of mercy, such wayes as have been untrodden in former times.

And that which God hath given us in hand, is an earnest of what wee have in hope: that wee have in possession bids us but look to what wee have in promise.

And expect the performance of it, because God loves the Church: *the Heart of Christ is taken with the Church*.

Hee loves his Church, and therefore hee will purifie his Church, and take away her dross and tinne.

Hee loves his Church, and therefore will hee reform his Church.

Hee loves his Church, and therefore will hee take away whatsoever doth offend, all *soul-burthens*, all *conscience-burthens*, which oppress the spirits of his own People.

1. The Church is his *Fold*, and hee will destroy the *Wolves*, which have gotten in to devour the sheep.

2. The Church is his *Field*, and hee will weed out the *Tares*, and binde them in bundles to burn them.

3. The Church is his *House*, and hee will sweep it.

4. It is his *Floure*, and hee will fanne, and blow away the chaff.

That love which made him ingage himself to his Church, in precious promises, will not suffer him to rest, till hee hath made good those promises to it.

That love which moved him to begin, will not suffer him to rest, till hee hath made an end.

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You see in *Ezek. 37. 27.* the whole Chapter is but an addition of Mercy to Mercy.

When God begins to go forth towards a people, in a way of mercy, hee knows no stop, hee can make no end. *I will do this*, and also *this*, as you see in that Chapter. God adds *Mercy*, to *Mercy*.

And the reason is, because Free-love begins, and that knows no end.

The proceedings of Gods *Mercy*, towards his Church and People, do arise from himself, his own *Free-Grace*.

His *Justice* is from us, but his *Mercy* is from himself.

If, when hee threatned to punish *Israel*, hee saith, hee will adde *Judgement* to *Judgement*. *This, and this also will I do, Amos 4. 12.* How much more then when hee promiseth to shew *Mercy* to *Israel*, will hee adde *Mercy* to *Mercy*.

God hath *Also's* of *Mercy*, as well as of *Judgement*. See in *Ezek. 37. 27.* *My Tabernacle also shall bee, &c.*

Well then: Is the Heart of *Christ* taken with his Church and People? Then will wee with confidence belevee, and with patience wait and expect, that *Christ* will yet do more for his Church and People, than ever hee hath done, because hee loves them?

Let us but joyn *Supplication* with *Expectation*, *Praying*, with *Waiting*, and wee shall see it, to the joy of our hearts.

I never read, that ever God bestowed any great *Mercy* and deliverance upon his Church and People, but he first stirred up the hearts of his people mightily to pray unto him.

And never did God mightily stir up the hearts of his People to seek him, but hee wrought some great *Mercy* and deliverance for them.

God loves to make his People as thankful as they were prayerful: As happy Injoyers, as they were humble Seekers. When *Trouble* sends us to *Prayer*, then *Deliverance* shall send us to *Praises*.

Let us then joyn our *Supplications* to our *Expectations*. Times of great *Expectations*, should bee times of Great *Supplications*: whether they bee

1. *Expectations* of *Hope*, the Object whereof is *Good*.

2. Or, *Expectations* of *Fear*, the Object whereof is *Evil*.

3. Or, *Mixed Expectations* between *Hope* and *Fear*, as our times are, they are times of *Expectation*, and therefore they ought to bee times of *Supplication*. Wee are now big with *Expectation*, let us now bee mighty in *Supplication*. Great *Stones* are not to bee turned over without great strength. Great *Mercies* are not to bee gotten without great strivings. The *Man-child* of *Deliverance* is not to bee brought forth without pangs.

Let us then bee mighty in *Prayer*. That will make all our present throws and pangs subservient to deliverance: And then let us stand still and wait.

1. Wait

1. *Wait for performance of Promises.*

2. *Wait for performance of Prayers.*

There are many thousand *Prayers* registred in *Gods-book*, and many thousand *Tears* put up in *Gods-bottle*. Let us wait when all these shall come down upon our heads in a *warm shower of Mercy*.

Wait when the great renew of Prayers will come in. The longer the stay, the greater will bee the harvest. Wee say, *great Engines move slowly*. Smal things they are quickly wheeled about; but great Mercies they are long in conception, long in the womb, and long in the birth.

Magnarum rerum tarda melimina.

This is all our comfort: *God will not bring to the birth, and afterward not bring forth: nor will hee bring forth, and afterward shut the womb again*, as hee saith, *Isa. 66. 9*.

Hee is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Beginner*, and the *Finisher*; where hee laies the foundation, there hee will lay the roof upon it.

2. *Consolatory.*

If the Heart of *Christ* bee once taken with his Church and People: *Then hee will never take his heart off from them*. His heart once taken, shall never bee taken off. Men may love to day, and hate to morrow: but God cannot: whom hee loves once, hee loves to the end, even to all *eternity*.

As there was nothing in us, that was the ground of his planting his love upon us: so there is nothing that shall bee able to overturn the thoughts of his love, when once they are fixed on us.

Indeed our behaviour may bee such, as may cause God to bee angry with us, and correct us sharply; yea, and make us to know, wee had better never to have tryed conclusions with him: But there is nothing shall cause him to hate us, and cast us off. Hee may correct his *Spouse*, but hee will not divorce her. The *Israelites* were so hard-hearted, that for every trivial fact they would put away their Wives: But the *Lord hates putting away*, *Mal. 2. 16*.

If sin fore-seen were not able to hinder him from planting his heart on us: but though hee saw what wee would bee, yet hee loved us: How then shall it bee able to over-turn the thoughts of his heart, when once they are fixed on us?

Men indeed are not able to see to the utmost of things; they are not able to discover and fore-see all the inconveniences and evils that may arise: and therefore that being discovered after, which was not fore seen before, may bee a ground to alter their affections, and change their thoughts, when fixed. The less *Judgement* and fore-sight in men, the more *fickleness*, and changeableness in men.

But now God hee fore-saw all. Hee fore-saw all that, which thou now thinkest is a ground for him to alter his mind to thee.

And, if all that fore-seen could not hinder him from fixing his love

love on thee, neither shall it be able to move him to take off his heart, when once his heart is taken with thee.

Hence hee is said to make an everlasting Covenant with us, and hee will never depart from us. Nay, Hee will put his fear into our hearts, that wee shall never depart from him, Jer. 32. 40.

And Isa. 54. 9, 10. saith the Lord (speaking of the Covenant of Grace, which hee will make with his people.) It shall be as the Waters of Noah unto mee: for as I have sworn that the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth: so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. As if hee had said, this is as sure as the other: the one as firm as the other. You have experience of the one, beleeve the other. I give you the same pawn, the same seal of Heaven to confirm it.

If Men were as bad as Devils, they should never bring a second flood upon the World, because God hath sworn never to destroy it. And as hee hath sworn to that, and is therefore Redfast and immutable. So hee hath sworn to the other, that hee will never leave you, nor forsake you, and therefore God will not.

Object. But alas! Do wee not see that God doth sometimes forsake his Church and People?

Ans. Now for the answer of this, wee will promise these three Distinctions.

1. There is a seeming, and there is a real forsaking.
2. There is a Temporary, and an eternal forsaking.
3. There is a partial, and a total forsaking.

From these wee will lay down three Conclusions, in answer to the Objection.

1. Conclusion.

God doth sometimes Seemingly, when hee doth not really forsake his people. God doth not really neglect his People, when hee seems to neglect them.

Hee seemed to neglect and forsake Job, Heman, David, Christ himself, when hee cryes, My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken mee?

It was Dissimulatio, non indignatio, as one speaks. Hee feigned himself to be gone, but was not gone.

The Cloud may take the Sun from our sight, but not rent it from the Skie. God may seemingly be gone, when hee is really there.

Hee seemed to be gone from Job, but hee was really there. Otherwise Job could not have trusted in him, in that great difficulty.

The same I may say of Heman, of David. Though God seemed to be gone, yet hee was really there. Otherwise they could not have prayed, exercised their Faith, and fought after God, as they did.

Deus bonos non negligit, cum negligit.

So also was it with the Church in the *Canticles*, cap. 3. 1. cap. 5. beg. And that is the first Conclusion, God may seemingly, when not really forsake his People.

2. Conclusion.

God may partially forsake his People; but hee doth never totally forsake them.

I say, God may in part forsake his People, which may bee occasioned on their part, by some fresh and new-acted sin. As you see it was with *David*, P^{sa}l. 51. 1. *David* had sinned: God had withdrawn himself. God was gone, comfort was gone, light was gone for a time. *Works of Darknes*, and *walking in Darknes* went together. Hee did not follow the *Direction*, and therefore wanted the *Consolation* of the *Spiris*.

But though hee doth partially sometimes, yet hee doth never totally forsake his people.

For the clearer understanding of this Conclusion, you must know there is a *threefold Presence* of God

1. *Quickening.*

1. *Comforting.*

3. *Supporting.*

1. God may forsake a man in part, in respect of his *Quickening* presence, and leave a man to the barrenness, flatness, deadness of his own spirit for a time, that the soul cannot pray, hear, meditate, do any thing, as formerly it hath done. As it was with *Sampson* when his locks were cut, his strength was gone; and therefore though hee thought to go out, and do as hee did in former times, yet hee found there was no such matter; hee was become even as another man: so it is here, *our strength lyes, not in our hair, but in our head*. When God is gone, our *Locks* are cut, our *strength* is gone. And though wee may think to go upon duties, as at other times, and meet with those lively and vigorous workings of spirit in duty: yet wee shall finde no such matter; wee are even become as other men.

Indeed so much of his *Quickening Spirit* God leaves in the worst of times, as usually, to keep up the heart to duty. The soul will pray, will read, &c. but hee gives not so much, as to carry the soul through the duty, with that life and vigour of affection, which formerly it had.

Time was, that the soul never came to prayer without an inflamed heart, never upon the duty, without a quick and enlarged soul. But now the spirit is dead in duty, cold in duty, heartless in the performance of those things, wherein the heart was so much taken.

2. God may forsake a man in respect of his *Comforting* presence. Though

Though man is not able to rob us of our comforts, and take away our joyes, they are such as the armes of men are not long enough to reach; yet God hee can. Hee may eclipse our joyes, and damp our comforts, and withdraw the beams of his Countenance from us, and leave us in darkness and trouble. I say, hee may turn our Day into Night, our Light into Darknes, our Comforts into Discomforts.

Thus you see it was with *Job*, with *David*, with *Heman*, *Psalm* 88. who, although they had the *Quickening-presence* of God, yet they wanted his *Comforting-presence*.

And indeed of the two, it is better to want the *Comforting*, than the *Quickening-presence*. Better to want *Comfort* than *Life*; *Faith* than *Graces*, or the lively exercise of them. The one is the *Esse*, the other but the *Bene Esse* of a Christian. A man may live, and serve God, and obey him, and yet want his *Comforting-presence*; as you see, *Isa.* 50. 10. But hee cannot live without his *Quickening-presence*.

3. God may forsake a man in part, in respect of his *Quickening-presence*, and hee may more forsake a man in respect of his *Comforting-presence*: But God doth never forsake us in respect of his *Supporting-presence*.

In the saddest condition, in the darkest night, in the stormiest day, the soul hath still support from him.

David, *Job*, *Heman*, they wanted the *Comforting-presence* of God for a time; but yet they had his *Quickening*, and they had his *Supporting-presence*.

As hee told *Paul*, so hee did for all. His strength was seen in their weakness, and his Grace was sufficient for them. Sufficient to bear them up in the tryal, and sufficient to bring them out of the tryal. So much for the second Conclusion.

3. Conclusion.

God may forsake his People for a time, not for ever.

It is but a *Temporary*, not a *Final*, not an *Eternal* forsaking, *Isa.* 54. 7, 8, 9, 10. For a moment have I forsaken thee, but with everlasting kindness will I gather thee, have mercy on thee. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills shall be removed: but my kindness shall not depart from thee.

And thus much shall serve for the answer of the Objection. And notwithstanding that, the Conclusion is firm. That if the Heart of Christ be once taken with his Church and People, hee will never take it off; hee will never cleave forsake them.

And, as God will not forsake his Church, as *Forsaking* hath relation to *Spiritual cases*, *Soul-distresses*: So I might shew you at large, to prevent another Objection.

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That hee will not forsake his Church; as Forsaking hath relation to temporal and outward distresses.

You may take his word for it, *Josh. 1. 5. I will not leave, nor forsake thee.*

It is true, it was a promise made to *Joshua* in particular; but belongs to the whole Church of God in general.

General promises may have particular applications, and particular general.

As general promises belong to every particular Member: So particular promises may belong to the whole body. And therefore though it was a promise to *Joshua*; yet the Apostle (who knew the mind of God makes it ours, as well as his. Hee brings it into the Common-stock, and shews it part of our riches, *Heb. 13. 9. Let your Conversation be without Covetousness; for hee hath said, Hee will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* In brief, Hee will not forsake his Church;

1. Either hee will protect them from danger
2. Or hee will deliver them out,
3. Or hee will support them in,
4. Or hee will sanctify all to them.

Which is the third Conclusion which flows from this Doctrine.

3. *Comfortary*

As the Heart of Jesus Christ hee taken with his Church; then all the passages of Gods providence in the World, are for the good of his Church and People.

All the dealings of God in the world, not a step God takes in the World, but hee walks towards his people in it.

1. All the passages of Gods Providence to the Church in general.
2. All the passages of Gods Providence to any member of the Church in particular, they are all for good.

1. For the first, All the passages of Gods providence to his Church in general, they are for good. Bee they sad, or bee they joyfull, they are all for good. Are they sad? it is to humble them, to quicken them, to purge them, to purifie them, to blow away their chaff.

This is certain. Whatever is done in the World, is done either by Gods Permission, or by Gods Approbation. God must either permit, or allow of what ever is done in the World.

And assure yourselves, God would never permit, much less would hee ever allow, and approve of any thing to be done in the World, which should not be for the good of those hee loves so dearly.

Whatever wind blows, bee it North, or South, good or evil; all is for the Churches benefit. As the Physician ordereth poisonous

nous and destructive ingredients unto usefull services, the health of the Patient: So God turneth those things which in themselves are evil, and destructive, to the good and comfort of his Church and People.

Hence is it, that *Christ* turneth the saddest and sorest perplexities that ever the World shall see, into an use of Comfort to his Church; *Luk. 21. 25, 26, 27, 28.* There shall bee signs in the Sun, and Moon, and Stars; distress of Nations, with perplexity, &c. Men shall faint for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the World; for the Powers of Heaven shall bee shaken; and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a Cloud, with Power and great Glory. When these things begin to come to pass -- then look up, and lift up your heads: for your Redemption draweth nigh.

One would think this were a strange consequent deduced from such an Antecedent. A Consequent so comfortable, from an Antecedent so terrible. It seems strange, that such a terrible Doctrine as this, should afford an use of Consolation. Yet so it is. Bee the Premises what they will, the Conclusion is good. Bee his Providences what they will, his Promises are good: and those Promises shall turn all his Providences to good at the last.

2. As all the passages of Gods Providence to the Church in general: So every passage of his Providence to any Member of it in particular, is for the good of the Church.

All your Injoyments, they are love. You may read the Heart of *Christ*, the image of a friend, ingraven upon all you have. You may behold the impress of love, the good will of God directed about all you do enjoy.

All that wicked men do enjoy, is but from the Hand of God; *Ex largitate.* that is the highest tenure they can shew; even his general Providence, which causeth the Sun to shine upon the good and bad. And this Tenure may bee cut off at pleasure.

But all that you do enjoy, is from the Heart and good will of God. They are expressions of his good will to you, and you may read Love in all.

Nay, they are the Earnests of further love. You may see and read Heaven and Glory in all you have.

Wee may well say, whatever the People of God do enjoy, They are

1. The fruits of Prayer.
2. The performance of Promises.
3. Expressions of Loves.
4. Encouragements to beleve.
5. Inablements to obey.
6. Earnest pennies of Heaven and Glory.

2. All your wants, as well as all your injoyments are mercy, are love. There is an Expedi in all the sad passages of Gods providence to you. They are Expedi to try you, Expedi to humble you,

you, to exercise you, to winne you, to wean you, &c.

Whatever thy condition is, it proceeds,

1. From the best God.

2. From the best of Gods, his Heart and good will.

3. It is the best for thee.

Wicked men have a curse hid in their best things: a curse in their gold, a curse in their silver, a curse in their health. But Gods people have a blessing hid in the worst things. You have a blessing in poverty, a blessing in sickness, a blessing in crosses, a blessing in death it self.

Trials are not in the Promise, but Mercy is in the Promise. Though Poverty, yet Mercy, though Afflictions, yet Mercy, And you can all tell mee, A cross in Mercy, is better than a comfort in wrath. A life in love, better than an enjoyment in displeasure. More dye in the Blood, than in the Ebbe. Though prosperity bee more cordial, yet afflictions are more physical. Wee often surfeit of Cordials, when Physick doth us good. And a sanctified cross is better than an unsanctified comfort, &c.

4. Consolatory.

If the Heart of Christ bee taken with his Church and People,

1. Then see what a fearful thing sin is, which doth cause God oftentimes to deal hardly with that, which his soul loves so dearly.

God doth oftentimes afflict and punish his Church sharply and severely: which yet his heart is much taken withall. And sin is the cause. And therefore what a fearful thing is sin!

How grievous would it bee to you, to bee forced to take hard courses with a Child your heart is taken withall: though it bee to do him good.

Why God is taken with his Church, and do you not think it moves God to afflict and chastise it?

Wee would faine do all the good wee can to the persons wee love. Oh! wee can never do enough for them. Why so it is with God to his Church: Hee loves his Church, and willingly would hee do any thing for it. And it is the grief of his soul, that hee must take contrary courses with us, to do us good: that hee must bee forced to afflict and chastise them hee loves so dearly: to bring them to Life by Death, to Good by Evil, to a Crown by Crosses.

When God parted with the ten Tribes, you see what a conflict there was in him: how his bowels stirred, and were moved towards them, notwithstanding all their sins, *Hos. 11. 8. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim! How shall I deliver thee, Israel! How shall I make thee as Admah! How shall I set thee as Zeboun! My heart is turned within mee, my repentings are kindled together.*

How loath was God to seal up a Bill of Divorce! His heart loved

loved her, though shee was an *Adulteress* to him.

And when *Judah* did justify the sin of her Sister *Israel*, exceeding her in *Idola*, what trouble was it to God to cast her off? How willing was hee to receive her after all her adulteries? *Fer. 3. 12. Thou hast plaid the Harlot, &c.* And when shee would go on in her adulteries: yet how unwilling still was hee to give her up: till at last it grew so high, that there was no Remedy, 2 *Chron. 36. 16.* hee must needs do it.

And when hee had done it, how exceedingly was Gods heart moved, that hee must bee forced to deal so hardly with them hee loved so dearly? read *Fer. 12. 7, 8, 9, &c.* See how God laments over the loss of that which their sins would not give him leave to keep. *I have forsaken mine house! I have left mine heritage! I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies!* And what was it that forced God to deal so hardly with them hee loved so dearly? Why it was sin, 2 *Chron. 36. 15, 16.* Hee sent Messengers, because hee had compassion on them: They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and despised his Prophets: until the wrath of the Lord arose against his People, till there was no Remedy. And which of these hath remained to bee done among us? How hath our Sun been darkened, the Stars lost their light? How many burning and shining lights have been taken out of our Candlesticks, and planted in others? How many blown out by the rage of wicked men?

Did wee not justly fear, by reason of that *Idolatry, Superstition, Prophanation of Sabbath, Persecution of the Saints, and Messengers of God*, that our day was gone, our night approaching?

Did wee not fear, that wee were come up to this, that there was no remedy? That God should have opened the Stores of his wrath, and let in a Sea of his displeasure upon us? made us an *Achelama*, a field of blood, long before this?

Ah, my Brethren! Never Nation, never Church from whom God hath shewed himself more unwilling to depart and leave, than *England*.

Look upon the passages of us to God, and his wayes towards us, and see how unwilling hee declared himself. God hath upheld us, as if hee himself should fall, if wee did not stand: as if his *Glory* could not stand, if wee fall: as if his *Glory* had depended upon our preservation.

And how can wee better answer Gods dealings towards us, than to abandon that, cast out that which was our fear, and gave God just occasion to destroy us? Let us now do by our sin, as the *Israelites* did by their *Leaven*. There was

1. *Inquisitio fermenti*. There was search made for it. So let us search out that *Leaven of sin, Superstition, Idolatry*, which have sowed our Kingdome, and laid us open to the stroke of Gods wrath. Search your houses, search the land, search your hearts.

2. *Ejectio fermenti.*3. *Execratio fermenti.*

And let all bee found in us, if ever wee would have a Pass-over.

Otherwise our *Preservations* from former, will bee but *Reservations* to future, and worser evils: sin will cause God to punish those hee loves.

5. *Confessary.*

If the Heart of Christ bee so much taken with his Church; Then let this discover to you, into what you way resolve all the passages of Gods love to his Church and People, even into his *own Love*. His *Grace* is the rise, and his *Glory* is the end.

There are two main streams, in which the goodness of God doth run to his Church.

1. *The higher, and*2. *The lower.*

But both these streams have the same *Head*, the same spring from whence they come, even his *own Love*.

1. For the *higher, or upper streams*, and these are four.

1. *Election.* 2. *Justification.* 3. *Sanctification.* 4. *Glorification.*

And all these arise from the great *Abyss*, and *Sea* of his mercy toward his Church.

His heart is taken with us; and therefore

1. *Hee chose us*, Deut. 7. 7, 8. *The Lord loved you not, nor chose you, because yee were more in number than any people: but because the Lord loved you.* So God did not set his heart on us, because wee were better than others; for there are others in the World who might have been made more lovely.

His heart is taken with us, therefore

2. *Hee justifies us.* Wee could do nothing to strike off any former score: for all wee did, set us further in debt: it was but an adding of sin to sin, guilt to guilt: the sin of our righteousness, to the sin of our unrighteousness, *Covering a blot with a blot*, as Isa. 38. 1.

No, it did arise from this. *His heart was taken with us*, therefore did hee *justify us*, Tit. 3. 7. *Wee are justified freely by his Grace.* The like, Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 4. 5. All which shew, that into this, all the expressions of his love are resolved.

His heart is taken with us, therefore

3. *Hee did sanctify us.* Our holiness is not wrought out of our own Principles; spun out of own bowels; compass by our own strength and industry: but freely imparted and given of God.

As our *Righteousness* is freely imputed: so our *Holiness* is freely imparted.

That

Operatur ex
Justificatione,
non in Justifi-
cationem.

That thou art not a killing Cain, a self murdering Saul, a despairing Judas, a prophane Esau, a drunken Baltazar, a filthy Sodomite, it ariseth from this, *meer Mercy*.

But that God hath not only *restrained* thee, but *renewed* thee; not only *chained* up thy spirit, but *changed* thy spirit: This is *Free Mercy*. And so the Scripture tells us, *1. Pet. 1. 3. Blessed bee the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again. -- Not only Mercy, but abundance of Mercy. So James 1. 18. Of his own free will begot hee us. And that in John 1. 13. Wee were born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man: But of God.*

Not of blood] Nor great men, nor good men can do it. *Regeneration* comes not by *Generation*.

Nor of the will of the flesh] Our will is but a fleshly will, and cannot beget a spiritual nature.

Nor of the will of man] It is not all the indeavours, of holy men, who labour to do us good, can do it.

But the Will of God] It is a mercy wee give least concurrence to, of all other. When wee have *Grace*, then wee are helpers for the growth, and increase of *Grace*; but who shall give *Grace*?

When the Candle is lighted, it will burn, but none but God can light up the Candle.

In after *Sanctification* wee *concur*: There is no *concurrence* in *Regeneration*.

This is the *freest Mercy* of all other. When God hath wrought *Grace*, there is some ingagement for God to go on: but there is nothing to move him to bestow *Grace*. Here is the ground: *His heart is taken, therefore hee sanctifies us.*

His heart is taken with us, therefore

4. *Hee glorifies us.* As our *Justification*, so our *Sanctification* and *Glorification* arise from the same ground: *His heart is taken with us.*

The *Papists* indeed would have us to *merit* Heaven. And the *Council of Trent* denounce a curse upon those who say, *A justified person cannot merit Heaven.* But alas! *What are all our deserts to this Glory!* If a man should serve God, and suffer a thousand years, what were this to merit eternitie in Glory?

No, here is the ground of all. *His heart is taken with us, and therefore hee glorifies us.* And so the Scripture speaks plain, *Eph. 2. 5. By Grace yee are saved.* And lest hee should never make in firm enough, hee adds, in the 8, and 9, verses, *By Grace yee are saved. -- not of works.*

So that you see into what to resolve the *higher streams* of his Love: his chusing us, his justifying, his sanctifying, and his glorifying us. *His heart is taken with us -- therefore hee chole us; therefore hee justifies us, &c.*

2. As you may see into what to resolve all the *higher*. So the *lower streams* of his love to his Church. All into this, *His heart is taken with his Church.*

His

Quid sunt omnia opera ad tantam gloriam? Bern. Si homo mille annis serviet.

His heart is taken with us; therefore hee doth protect us.

His heart is taken with us; therefore hee will preserve us.

His heart is taken with us; therefore hee will support us.

His heart is taken with us; therefore hee will deliver us.

All the good wee have in Hand, and all the good wee have in Hope: All the Mercies bestowed, and all those which God is bestowing on us: Look upon all as a continued threed spun out of the bowels of Free-Grace, and Mercy.

God hath done great things for us; and from this they have arisen: His Heart is taken with us; his Love towards us, *Jer. 31. 3, 4. I loved thee with an everlasting love; — therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.*

Alas! If God had looked upon us, and taken either ground or motive from any thing in us, to do this for us, wee should never have enjoyed it.

1. There was no ground, no foundation of desert in us. (*Wee abhorre the thoughts of it*) for God to raise such a fabrick of mercy upon, as hee hath done.

If any thing in his Church were the foundation of the structure of mercy, which wee expect God to raise, wee might look for a *mean building*. Such weak foundations must have as weak a structure. A building must bee proportionable to the foundation. But seeing Gods own heart is the foundation, his own mercy and good will towards us, which is so strong, so firm, so full a foundation: Hence it is, that wee may expect a structure of mercy suitable to the foundation.

And, as this is the foundation of all those *great and stupendous things*, which God hath done for us: So it is a ground for us to expect, that God will yet do *greater things* for us, than ever hee hath done.

Indeed, when wee look upon our selves, wee are at an end in our thoughts, and think God is at an end in his Mercy: but when wee look up toward God, and see there the ground of what wee have, this keeps up our hearts from sinking, and causes us to look upon all wee have, as an *earnest of more*.

Men that are at the top of an high place, if they look downwards, their eyes dazle, and their heads grow dizzy: but if they look up towards Heaven, they recover themselves again. God hath raised us up to some height of mercy, and if wee look downwards, if wee look upon our selves, wee are driven past the utmost of our thoughts: but let us look up to Heaven, whence this mercy wee have, hath its spring and foundation, and wee shall quickly recover.

Though there bee nothing in us, yet there is something in God, and that which is in God is the ground of this mercy, and therefore will hee go on in the wayes of his own mercy.

I have often thought within my self, how far God at this time hath

hath out-gone his people in Mercy.

Hee hath not only out-gone the *deservings* of his People, but out-gone the *desires* of his people, the *prayers* of his People. And consulting below, I am ready to think *God is at an end of his Mercy*.

But, when I recover my self, and look upon the *ground of Gods* doing good to his Church and People: *Not to bee any goodness in the Church*: but *merely his own goodness*: This doth revive mee again; put heart into mee that God will yet *do greater things* for his Church, than yet hee hath done.

As I said before; when God doth execute *Judgements* upon his Church, hee adds *Judgement* to *Judgement*: so much more; when hee comes in a way of *Mercy* to his Church, hee adds *Mercy* to *Mercy*.

God is oftentimes weary in going on in a way of *Judgement*, because the exercise of his *Judgements* are drawn out by us, our sins. Hee is said *not to afflict willingly*: and his *Judgements* hee calls his *strange work*. It is not so natural to God, and therefore he is quickly weary of it.

But God is never weary of the exercise of his *Mercie*, and therefore hee goes on to adde *Mercy* to *Mercy*. Wee say, the *Bee* gives *Hony* naturally; the *sting* only, when shee is forced to it: So God, it is natural to him to shew *Mercy*, but hee is provoked to exercise *Judgement*.

Hence hee is called the *Father of Mercies*, begets *Mercy*. *Mercy* is the *Issue of God*, most natural to God; and being so, hence *Mercy* pleaseth him. *Actions of Nature* are *Actions of Delight*. God is never so well pleased with any carriage towards his Church, as those which are in the wayes of mercy.

Nay, if hee do afflict his Church, it is to shew *Mercy*. *Mercy* is the end of all his dealings towards his Church; and therefore *Mercy* being so natural, so pleasing, and that the *Mercy of God* is the ground of his expressions of love to us, as it is: though our sins may draw out the expressions of his *Justice*; yet his *Mercy* doth arise from himself: Hence wee may have a ground to expect yet *greater things* than ever.

6. Consecratory.

If the heart of *Christ* bee so much taken with his Church. Then see with what *confidence* wee may *pray* for the good of the Church of *Christ*. *Christ's* heart is taken with it.

A man may pray for himself, and doubt of hearing, because hee is not able to make out his particular interest in *Gods Love*. But if a man pray for the good of the Church, hee is sure to have hearing, because the heart of *Christ* is taken with it.

Let us then make use of all our interest and acquaintance in Heaven, in the behalf of the Church at this time.

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Y. H

1. *It is a thing, which God commands.*
2. *A thing, which God expects.*
3. *A thing, which God rewards.*
4. *A thing, which God threatens the neglect of.*

Much might bee said to move you. *Your good, and your evil* lies in the Churches. As *Jeremy* used this as an argument, why, to pray for the civil estate of *Babylon*; because in the peace thereof they should have peace: if theirs in *Babylons*, how much more ours in *Sions*?

7. Consecratory.

•If the heart of Christ bee so much taken with his Church, *Then what will become of those, who are enemies to his Church and People!*

Is the heart of Christ so much taken with his Church and People. Then woe bee to them that offend his Church. *If you touch them, you touch the apple of his eye.*

Gods People are dear to God. They are *his Spouse, his Children, his Members*, purchased with the price of his blood; *his inheritance, his Portion*, all *his commings-in*. Those hee dyed for, shed his blood for, one drop whereof is worth a *thousand Worlds*. And therefore those whom hee was content to shed his blood for, certainly hee doth more esteem than all the World besides.

Wee say, whiles the Iron is in its own nature, you may handle it, and meddle with it, but if once the nature of fire bee added unto it, if you touch it, it will burn you: So whiles the Children of God, are but the Children of men, you may deal with them as with other men; but if once the nature of God bee stamped on them, the Image of Christ bee drawn upon them, it will bee dangerous for you to meddle with them, least fire break out of their mouth to devour you.

• Wee read, *Zach. 12. 3.* God said, hee would make *his Church* a burthensome stone, &c.

St. Ferom on that place saith, it was a Metaphor taken from the custome of the *Jews*, who to try their strength, had at the gates of the City great stones; if they could lift them, well and good; but if not, they crushed themselves with them: So God will make *his Church* a burthensome stone. Whoever lieth at it, shall crush himself; whoever seeks to hurt it, shall ruine himself. You see it in *Pharaoh, Haman, Achisophel, Julian*.

Haman lifted so long at this stone, that it fell on him at last, and crushed him.

Pharaoh followed the *Children of Israel* so long, that hee could not return at last, but was overwhelmed in the Waters.

Julian attempted it so long, till at last himself was overthrown.

Hee

Hee that shoots in a Peece over-charged, strikes down himself, not that which hee aimed at. Hee who intends evil against the Church, shoots in a Peece over-charged, and is sure to bee struck down with his own recoil.

Wee see it in our dayes. They who have digged pits for us, have fallen into them themselves. They who laid snares for us, in them is their own foot taken. They have but made Rods for their own backs; paved a way to their own destruction; digged graves to bury themselves, in seeking our ruine.

The Scepter of Christ hath been too strong for the Principality of Satan, hee hath a Rod of Iron; a Scepter of Power, an arm of strength, to crush in peeces all his enemies. And therefore as Pilates wite said of Christ; *Have nothing to do with that just man.* So I to thee, seeft thou a godly man? beware of having any thing to do with him, by way of offence. For their Angels alway behold the face of their heavenly Father.

Eris sub pedib.
bun.

8. Consecratory.

If the heart of Christ bee so much taken with his Church, Then see here the Ground of Acceptation of the services of his people.

God being taken with the Persons, is taken with the performances of his People. Hee had respect to Abel, and then to his Offering. Christ, his heart was taken with the person, and then with his performance.

Hence Christ saith to his Church, Cant. 2. 14. *Let mee see thy Countenance, let mee hear thy voice: for thy Countenance is comely, and thy voice is sweet.*

Indeed, if Acceptation should arise from the worthiness of our duties, wee should never look to bee accepted. There is so much sin in our services, so much evil in our good, so much coldness in our best heats, so much formality in our chiefest power, so much deadness in our best life, so much of the World, so much of our earth in our employments for Heaven. And if Acceptation should arise from any worth in them, wee should bee sure to mis of it: But arising from his good will and Mercy to us, his heart being first taken with us, is taken with our performances. Hence the Assurance of Acceptation.

Nay, and not only of our purest and perfectest services; but even of our poor and imperfect duties, such as wee throw away for dead, and cast prayers, Cant. 5. 1. Hee drinks the Milk as well as the Wine.

Wee look upon a prayer accompanied with deadness, distraction, as a cast prayer. Oh! say wee, how can God accept of such impure, imperfect services!

But hence it ariseth not from the excellency of your prayers, but from the indulgency of his Grace. It is the voice of his Spouse,

(L 2)

though

though never so weak. It is the cry of a *Member* of his, though never so faint. And hee can put his *odours*, his *intense* to them, though never so impure, and make them *acceptable*, Rev. 8. 4.

Use of Examination.

But now, my Brethren, it will bee a great matter of inquiry, *whether wee have an interest in this love.*

As one said when hee looked upon the Rainbow, and in that read *Gods Covenant*, never to drown the world again. Ah! but faith hee, what is this to mee, *If I bee drowned*, I may bee drowned, though the World bee not drowned.

So may you say, You tell us of the *exceeding love of Christ to his Church*. But what if *I bee not of his Church*? what if I have no interest in his *Love*? what's all this to mee?

But then I suppose you are desirous to know whether you have an interest in this love. It concerns your everlasting good to have an interest, and your present comfort to know you have an interest.

Now in this inquiry I would have you

1. *To examin your hearts thoroughly.* Deceits lye low. A false evidence is the fruit of a slight and superficial search.

2. In your inquiry *let not any thing* which is *compatible* with any, who have no interest in this *love*, bee a *bottom*, on which your soul resteth.

I have told you sometimes, and tell you again. Whatever another man may have and do, and yet have no interest in this love of *Christ*, cannot bee a sufficient evidence for thee, that thou having or doing that, hast an interest. -- Acquaint thy self with the most clearing and proving evidences.

3. Take thy evidences from the *carriage of the Spirit*: neither at the *best*, nor at the *worst*, but the *middle way*, which is most thy self.

If thou look upon thy self at the *worst*, thou mayest bee *discouraged*. If at the *best*, thou mayest bee *deceived*. Many have had such affections in an *Heat*, which in *cold blood* have nothing of them.

4. Judge not of thy self by *particular actions and carriages*: but look upon the *universal frame and bent of thy spirit*. No certain rule is to bee established upon a particular instance, whether good or bad.

I might lay down other rules to observe in your inquiry. But wee will come to the inquiry it self.

Wouldest thou know whether thou art one with whom Christs heart is taken? See whether thou art of his Church. Art thou one, who art taken out of the World? Art thou one, whom God hath called? one whom hee hath justified? one whom hee hath

regenerated? sanctified? Art thou one, who art washed, purged, renewed?

These might bee in the *general*; but are too obscure. But I will name you but one, and it is a plain one, and none more *demonstrative*.

Wouldst thou know whether the heart of Christ bee taken with thee? why then see,

*Art thou one, whose heart is taken with Christ? If Christ bee taken with thee, thou art taken with Christ. It is a mutual, a reciprocal taking. Whatever God doth to the soul, it makes an impression in the soul of the like to God. God delights in us, and thereupon wee come to delight in him. God knows us, and thereupon wee know him, Joh. 10. 14. God apprehends us, and thereupon wee apprehend him. Hee chuseth us, and thereupon wee chuse him. Hee loves us, and thereupon wee love him, 1 Joh. 4. 19. His heart is taken with us, and thereupon our hearts come to bee taken with him. Our love to him is nothing else but *radius amoris Dei erga nos in Deum reflexus*: a beam of Gods love reflected back upon God. So that this now is a true *character of Christs* heart being taken with thee, if thy heart bee taken with Christ.*

Quest. But you will say, *How shall I know whether my heart bee taken with Christ?*

Ans. For the answer of this, because upon this foundation I will lay the whole weight of this discourse, in this *Use*,

1. A heart taken with Christ, is a heart which *knows Christ*, and hath tasted of Christ. Are you such as *know Christ*? For knowledge of Christ precedes the love of Christ. Hee who doth not *know*, cannot love. Things unseen may, but things unknown cannot bee loved, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *Whom having not seen yet love, but never not known.*

Invisi possumus amare; incognita nequam.

All love to Christ doth arise from discoveries and manifestations of Christ to the soul. Either from the discoveries of those beauties, those attractive excellencies that are in him, or with that, from the discovery of his heart and good will towards us.

Now *blind men* cannot discern of beauties; nor ignorant men of the beauties of Christ. Christ is to them as a *Mine of Gold* covered over with earth and rubbish: as a *Bed of Pearl and Diamonds* hid with an heap of sand: as a *glorious Messiah* under a contemptible outside. And wanting eyes to see through the *Veil of his Flesh*, through the bark and outside of his *Humanity*, they can behold no beauty in him. As *Isaiah* speaks of carnal men, Isa. 53. 2. *When you behold him, you see no beauty in him, that shall make him desirable.*

Now then, art thou one who *knows Christ*? did ever God reveal him to thee in a promise? what apparitions hath Christ made to thy soul? what manifestations? what discoveries that may evidence to thee, that thou knowest him?

There

There are *four manifestations*, or discoveries of *Christ* to the soul, which do exceedingly take the soul. Indeed every apparition of *Christ* doth take the heart: but at these times the heart is not only wooed and won, but overcome with his sweetness and glory.

1. *After the soul hath long lyen bedrid in sorrow*, been overwhelmed in the deeps of *Legal Humiliation*, and have been broken and shattered in peeces with consternation, and apprehensions of sin, and Gods wrath for it. Then a discovery of *Christ*, and apparition of *Christ* to the soul, is a resurrection from the dead.

When *Christ* comes by a promise into the soul, and displaies his glory, the *Riches*, and *Greatness*, and *Freeness* of his *Grace*, as to *Moses*; *The Lord God*, gracious and mercifull, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, *Exod. 34. 6. 1, I am hee who forgiveth thy iniquities, &c. Isa. 43. 25.* Then is the soul beyond expression, inamoured with him; now it is overcome with his beauties and excellencies, and even ravished with his love. And this is the first eminent taking of the heart with *Christ*.

2. *When the soul hath been upon the stormy Sea of temptations and desertions*; hath long laboured under the sense of Gods withdrawings and absence from the soul. And *Christ* returns again, breaking the dark and thick cloud, and shining into the soul. Who can then expresse the warmth, the comfort, the revivings, the holy heats and flames of love and affection to *Christ*.

You see how it was with *Job*. *I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear: But now mine eyes see thee.* And certainly the sight of his beauties did take him: those eyes which saw him were like a burning-glasse to the heart, to kindle the flames and fervors of holy affections towards him again.

You see how it was with the Church, *Cant. 3. 4.* *Christ* had withdrawn himself: Shee makes inquiry after him, but could not hear of him. At last after all her trouble, *Christ* appears to her soul. And you may read there, how exceedingly her heart was taken with his return. *I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him, and would not let him go, untill I had brought him into my Mothers house, Cant. 3. 4.*

3. *When the soul doth sit down to contemplate*, and read over the beauties and loves of *Christ*: when it is in the contemplations of those surpassing excellencies, and admired sweetness which is in *Christ*. And *Christ* (whiles the soul is busy in feeding on these thoughts) doth make a discovery of himself to the soul: makes the soul to see a vision of his glory: *Oh! how is the heart taken with him! it is even drowned and sunk in a Sea of glory. Ah! what clasping, what imbraces! what loves are there then betwixt Christ and the soul! It is impossible for mee to expresse: or for mee, or you to conceive. It is a vision of glory, the porch of Heaven.*

4. *When*

4. When the soul is under outward pressures, afflictions, prison, sickness, upon death-bed. Then a visit of Christ, a discovery of himself doth exceedingly ravish and take the heart. Here is kindness indeed, riches for the poor, liberty for a prisoner, a cordial for the sick; Here is all in Christ's manifestation.

Well then, wouldst thou know whether thy heart bee taken with Christ? dost thou know Christ? didst thou ever see the face of Christ in a promise? what apparitions hath Christ made to thee? what manifestations within thee, in the work of Grace? what manifestations to thee, in the beginning of glory? You who know not Christ, cannot love Christ.

2. Sign.

An heart taken with Christ, is not excessively taken with any thing else.

The sweetness of Christ doth overcome all the sweetness in other things, in the Creatures. Vincit dulcedo dulcedinem.

As it is nothing but ignorance which makes men admire any thing here on earth: if men knew the excellencie of other things, they could not admire such trifles as they do.

So here, it is nothing but ignorance of better things which makes us dote upon things here below. Did wee see his beauties, all the World would bee blackness. Did wee see his fulness, all the World were but emptiness.

I say, did wee but know the excellencies and beauties of Christ, and the satisfying-sweetness of his love, Nothing should have a room in our hearts, save hee only. The higher wee ascend toward Heaven, the lesser will the things on earth appear.

If you go to the top of the Mountains, men would appear but small: but if it were possible to go up to the Sun, the Mountains would appear nothing.

The love of Christ hath a raising-power, working our hearts as high as Heaven, and being there, all things here below are of no account and esteem to the soul. So saith Paul, a man on fire with the love of Christ. *Yea doubtless I count all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ -- And do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, Phil 3. 8.*

Well then, they whose hearts are taken with the Creature, taken with the World, taken with sin and vanity: These are too gross to bee taken with spiritual loves.

3. Sign.

What the heart is taken withall, the soul seems to live more in it, than in it self. Do but examine it in any thing she heart is taken,

taken withall; whether your comforts, your delights, your happiness lies not in them. The Worldling hee lives in his possessions. The Voluptuous man in his pleasures. And can no more live out of them, than the *Fish out of the water*, the *Salamander out of fire*. So here. If thy heart bee taken with *Christ*, then thou livest more in *Christ*, than thou doest in thy self. *I live, yet not I, but Christ*, saith the Apostle, *Gal. 2. 20.* Thou canst no more subsist without him, than the *Beam without the Sun*: than the *spark without the fire*. Nay, no more live without him, than the *body without meat*, nay, the *body without the soul*. *Christ* is to the soul, as the soul is to the body. Now as the body cannot live without the soul: So the soul cannot live but in *Christ*, who is *Anima Anima*, the *Soul of the Soul*, for mee to live is *Christ*.

I say, if thy heart bee taken with *Christ*, thou livest in *Christ* more than in thy self. Thy life, thy comforts, thy happiness, they are all folded up in him.

As *Judah* said of *Benjamin*. *Jacobs* life was bound up in the *Lads* life, *Gen. 44. 30.* So the Soul of *Christ*, my life, my joyes, my comforts, they are all bound up in thee. *All my fresh springs are in thee*, saith God of his Church, *Psal. 87. 7.* And, *whom have I in Heaven but thee! and in earth in comparison of thee!* *Psal. 73. 25.* saith the enamoured soul of God, his heart was taken with God, and hee lived in God more than in himself.

It was the speech of *Luther*, who (being in a great distress and spirituall trouble) had writ about the walls and table in his study, in great letters, *Vivis*. A friend comes to him, and demands the reason. Hee replies, *Vivis Christus; & si non, non optarem unam horam vivere.* -- His life was in *Christ*. Hee lived more in *Christ* than in himself.

Which makes the life of a Christian so safe, none can hurt him, and so sweet too, being a life in *Christ* out of himself. The best of others lyes in themselves: but the best of a Christian, those precious things in him, lies out of himself, and lies in *Christ*.

4. Sign.

What the heart is taken withall, that the comforts of the life are upheld by from day to day. Wee have many a weary step to go, and can no more go without comfort, than *Elijah* without food. Comfort is to the soul, as the soul is to the body. As the body without the soul is dead, so is the soul of men without comfort.

Now would you know what your heart is taken withall: see what the comfort of your life is upheld by from day to day.

Is *Iesus Christ* the comfort of your life? is hee the joy of your hearts?

Ex quo vis fonte.

Wicked men have varity of springs. If one bee drye, they go to another.

But

But the Saints have but one: *Christ*. And if hee bee gone, all is gone.

5. Sign.

An heart taken with *Christ* hath high *appretiations* and *valuations* of *Christ*. It values and esteems him above all the comforts and contentments in Heaven and Earth, *Psal.* 73, 25. *whom have I in Heaven, but thee! and in the Earth, in comparison of thee!* Here is the breathing of a soul taken with *Christ*. Hee prizeth *Christ* above all the comforts and contents in the World.

For the better unfolding of this sign, there is

1. *Something considerable in the Act.*
2. *Something in the Object -- Christ prized.*
3. *Something in the Measure -- above all the comforts, contents, &c.*

1. In the *Act* of *prizing Christ*, that wee do not mean a bare and naked *Estimate of Christ*, in the *Understanding*: but such an one as prevails with the soul, and commands the spirit of a man to do actions consonant and agreeable to that rate the *Judgement* set on *Christ*. I say, by *prizing of Christ*, wee do not mean a bare *act* of *Dijudication*, what a man in his *Judgement* may conclude *Christ* to bee worth. Many bee, that will tell you, they conclude *Christ* to bee worth a World: who yet will not part with any thing for *Christ*.

But I mean such an *act* of the *understanding*, as brings up the *Heart*, and the affections to close with *Christ* in that height which the *Understanding* rates him at.

I say, such an *Act of Appretiation* as prevails with a man to do actions consonant and agreeable to the rate it pretends to set on *Christ*. As you see the wise *Merchant*. Hee did not barely judge that the Pearl was worth all hee had: but hee did *Actions consonant* and agreeable to it. Seeing hee could not injoy the Pearl without parting withall hee had to compass it, hee sells all to compass the Pearl.

That is the first. A soul taken with *Christ* doth not only barely judge and esteem *Christ* worth all; but will part with all for the compassing of *Christ*.

2. *Here is something considerable in the Object. Christ prized.*

1. Wee do not restrain and limit this only to the *Person of Christ*. There is something in the *Person of Christ*, which may prevail with an *Unbeliever*, to esteem of him. The *dignity* of his *Person* being *God-Man*, having all beauties and excellencies in him. This may raise up a kinde of esteem of *Christ* in the hearts of *unbelievers*.

2. Neither do wee limit it only to the *Benefits of Christ*, and the great things which hee hath done for man in general, in

his humiliation, death, passion, &c.

But wee are to take Christ in the extent of Christ: Christ in his whole Latitude: Christ in his Holiness, Christ in his Laws, Christ in his Government, Christ in his Truth, *Totum Christi*, the whole of Christ. Hee that prizeth not Christ in his whole latitude, and extent, doth not prize Christ at all as hee ought to do.

As wee say of Faith, it doth not *eligere Objectum*, it doth not chuse its Object, single out what it will esteeme, and what not: but prizeth of Christ fully in the latitude and extent of Christ, of Christ in his Person, Christ in his Beauties, Christ in his Laws, in his Holiness, Truth, Government: And so highly, that they sold themselves to gain a Truth, lost themselves to save a Truth: They have made this brave adventure, thrown away themselves, that they might keep up a Truth, as you see in Queen Maries daies, in point of Transubstantiation. So that is the second. The soul taken with Christ is taken with All-Christ. As all in him is lovely: so the soul loves all; and prizes and esteems of all of Christ.

3. That which is considerable in the Measure is, That a soul taken with Christ, doth prize Christ above all comforts and contents in Heaven and Earth.

This Christ commands, *Mat. 16. 24.* If any man will come after mee, let him deny himself. If any] It is set down indefinitely. Not only you, who are poor, and have little to lose, and deny your selves in: but they, who have most. You that are rich, you that have lands, possessions, have Crowns and Scepters. If any poor, any rich, any beggar, any Prince, &c.

Hee must deny himself. Not only in things unlawfull, but lawfull. Hee must yeeld up his sins as a snare, his comforts, affares, and all as a Sacrifice for Christ, if hee call for them. *Mat. 10. 37.* Hee that loves Father or Mother more than mee, is not worthy of mee. These relations are expressed: but under those are comprized all the comforts and contents on earth.

And this was not only commanded, but it is practised by those, whose hearts are taken with Christ. You see in Abraham, who left all; in Moses, who prized more of the reproach of Christ, than all the treasures in Egypt; in David, *Psal. 73. 25.* Whom have I in Heaven but thee! or in Earth, in comparison of thee!

As the World would bee nothing elie but *Angia stabulum*, a noisome sink, a prison to a godly man, were it not that hee enjoys something of Christ here: So Heaven it self were but a gaudy Pageant, Vanity, if God and Christ were not there.

The Heaven, which carnal men do fancy is a Turkish Heaven, an heaven of pleasures, delights, comforts, but fleshly, outward. They conceive of it, according to their Principles.

But the Heaven of a godly man, it lies in God, it lies in Christ. Indeed

That is not Heaven, which is by Gods, but that is Heaven, which

which lies in God, to a godly man.

It was the meditation of one: Not *Heaven, O Lord; but God, and Christ*. Rather ten thousand times *Christ* without *Heaven*, than *Heaven* without *Christ*. Non cœlum
Domine, sed
Deus & Chri-
stus.

Thus doth the soul, that is taken with *Christ*, prize *Christ* above all the comforts, contentments of *Heaven* and *Earth*.

6. Sign.

An heart taken with Christ, the thoughts are taken up with Christ.

Such a man hee thinks *Christ*, and hee speaks *Christ*, hee lives *Christ*.

You know whatevēr a mans heart is taken with, it is never off his thoughts, never off his heart, hee is never well but thinking and speaking of that hee loves. The *thoughts* are the character of what the heart is taken withall. If thy heart bee taken with *Christ*, thy *thoughts* are taken up with him. *Christ* is alwayes upon thy thoughts; hee lies next to thy heart, when thou goest to bed hee is with thee, *Cant. 1. 13.* and when thou awakest hee is with thee, as *David* saith, *Psal. 139. 18.*

Indeed Gods people may have swarms of other thoughts; but they are not entertained, they are not welcome to them, they are their burden, and trouble. They come in as Intruders; and are not entertained as *Guests*. A wicked man entertains them as *Guests*, as friends, but they come into a godly man, as intruders, never invited, nor finde they welcome. This is that *Jeremiah* speaks. *How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* in a wicked mans heart they are *Lodgers*, and entertained as *Guests*; hee keeps doors open, spreads a Table for them, makes them a bed, bids them welcome: But in a godly man they crowd in, and finde no entertainment. Jer. 4. 14.

And as the *Thoughts* are taken up with *Christ*, so the *Tongue*. Hee thinks, and hee speaks *Christ*. When *Christ* is in the heart, the tongue will discourse and speak of him. Whatever is in the heart, and the heart is taken withall, that a mans discourse is most taken up withall. As *Psal. 37. 30.* *The mouth of the Righteous speaketh wisdom, and his Tongue talketh of Judgement.* And why? because the Law of his God is in his heart, *vers. 31.* So here on the same ground. Thy talk shall bee of *Christ*, of his beauties, his love, &c. because *Christ* is in thy heart. What the heart is taken withall, the *Tongue* will discourse on.

1. And indeed wee cannot have a fuller Subject to discourse on. Other Subjects they are empty subjects, quickly barren. Talk of what you will, you will bee quickly at an end. The bottome of other things are quickly sounded. But *Christ* is a full Subject. (Whatever you fall upon, is fulness in *Christ*.) An everlasting spring, which affordeth fresh supplies of matter. New and uncon-

ceivable discoveries do arise afresh to bee matter of supply to all eternity.

2. You cannot have a *sweeter subject*. *Christ is All-sweet: A Rose without prickles. A Rose, for sweetness: without prickles, for content.* And nothing is so but *Christ*. All the things of the world since the fall, have been *Roses beset with thorns*. Though there bee many sweets in the World; yet they are not *all-sweet*; they are beset with thorns: crosses with comforts, and afflictions with affections. *Christ is All-sweet*, and nothing but *sweet*. *Tota pulchra*, as hee said of his Spouse. *Thou art all-fair. Beauty without spot. Sweet without prickles.* Hee is a *Garden full of flowers, full of sweets*. You can light of none but you may *lade your thighs*, and go home satisfied.

3. You cannot have a more *delightfull subject*. *Christ* is the delight of all both in Heaven and Earth. Hee is *Gods delight*; his heart is taken with him; hee lies in his bosome. And *his Son*, in whom hee is *wel pleased*, hee is the *delight of the Angels*, whose delight it is to study *Christ*, and desire to learn and hear further discoveries of *Christ* by his Church, as *Peter* hath it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12.

4. You cannot have a more *profitable subject*. A subject which in conversing upon, wee are *transformed into his Glory*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. into the glory of him, who is the subject of the discourse. Have you not been kindled with heavenly fire? have not your hearts burned in the converses of him, as well as in the converses with him? Indeed wee cannot converse of him aright, but in some measure wee converse with him.

Doth it not sometimes fetch up your souls to glory, and leave you in Heaven?

Do you not finde it profitable to quicken you? to raise you? to comfort you? to inflame you? to humble you? to melt you? to transform you?

Doth not a discourse of his love quicken you, when you are dead? comfort you, when you are dejected? raise you, when faine? humble you, when proud? inflame you, when cold? Inlarge you, when straitned, and pent within your selves?

Oh! That such *worthless subjects* should so often take up our Tongues and Thoughts! And *Christ*, so full, so sweet, so *delightfull*, so *profitable a subject*, which shall bee matter for our souls discourse to all *Eternity*, shall bee thrown aside, as if not worth taking up!

You, whose hearts are taken with *Christ*, declare it to your own comfort, and the good of others. In this let your thoughts bee taken up with him, let your discourses bee more of him, shew your selves to love him, by thinking *Christ*, speaking *Christ*, living *Christ* more.

6. Sign.

An heart taken with *Christ*, thirsts after communion with, and nearer conjunction to *Christ*. You know whatever your hearts are taken withall, you desire, and thirst after communion, and converses withall. So it is here betwixt *Christ* and the soul. The soul taken with *Christ* longs to bee with him, and thirsts after communion with him.

1. In Grace here.

2. In Glory hereafter.

1. In Grace here. Oh! How the soul once taken with *Christ* desires converses with him, in prayer, in hearing, in meditation, *Isa.* 26. 8, 9. *The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea with my spirit within mee will I seek thee early.* And this is the *Genius* of a soul taken with *Christ*: that duty doth not content him, if hee finde not *Christ* in duty. If the end of a duty have left him on this side *Christ*, it hath left him so far short of comfort.

Others indeed, though they do a duty, yet as their hearts seek not *Christ* in the duty, so their souls can rest content without him, when the duty is done: but it is otherwise with a right-born-soul.

'Twas the speech of *Bradford*, that hee could never leave a duty, till hee had found communion with *Christ* in the duty: till hee had brought his heart into a duty-frame. Hee could not leave confession, till hee had found his heart touched, broken, and humbled for sin; nor *Petition*, till hee had found his heart taken with the beauties of the things desired, and carried out after them: nor could hee leave *thanksgiving*, till hee had found his spirit enlarged, and his soul quickened in the return of praises.

And it was the happiness of *Bernard*, a Heaven upon Earth, that hee faith of himself, *I never went from thee, without thee.* Hee found God in every duty: hee had communion with God in every prayer; which indeed is *Heaven on this side Heaven.*

Nunquam abs-
te, absq; tere-
cedo. Cœlum
extra Cœlum.

Thus hee, whose heart is taken with *Christ*, thirsts after communion with him, and no duty contents him, wherein hee hath not found either his quickening, or his comforting-presence: either communion with his Grace, or communion with his comfort.

2. As hee thirsts after communion with him here in Grace: so doth hee desire communion with him in Glory, *To bee with the Lord,* as the *Apostle*.

Whiles the soul is here, it sees the distance too great betwixt *Christ* and it, that shee cannot injoy that sweet communion with him. As the *Apostle* saith. *Whiles wee are present in the flesh, wee are absent from the Lord.* And therefore the soul breaths after him, desires to bee with him. *Cupio dissolvi*, saith the *Apostle*, *I desire*

to bee dissolved, and to bee with Christ.

The like of David, Psal. 42. 1, 2. *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God!* Hee had tasted the sweetness of Christ, and did not fear the bitterness of death.

Vitam in Patientia;
mori in Desiderio.

Hee had *Life in Patience; Death in Desire*; because by death hee should bee carried to more sweet and intimate conjunction with Christ.

Eja Domine,
mori ut te
videam, nolo
vivere, Volo
mori.

It was the speech of *Augustine*. *Lord, I will dye, that I may enjoy thee. I will not live, but I will dye. I desire to dye, that I may see Christ; and refuse to live, that I may live with Christ.*

And this disposition you see in the *Sponse* here. Her heart being taken with Christ, shee could not brook the distance betwixt Christ and her; and therefore cryes out, *Cant. 8. 1. Make haste, make haste my beloved.*

Though in one sense it is true, *hee that beleeves makes not haste*; yet here hee that beleeves most, and loves most, makes most haste.

The more the soul beleeves, and the more the heart is taken with Christ, the greater are the desires to bee with him.

Till Simeon had gotten Christ into his armes, hee was unwilling to dye: but after hee had Christ in his armes; *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for my eyes have seen thy salvation.*

Indeed here are but the *Esponsals* between Christ and the soul. Some *Broken-Rings, Contralts, Esponsals*, betwixt Christ and us. But then is the great *Marriage-day*, the *Solemnization of our Nuptials*, to all eternity.

Here wee do see him but *dimly and darkly*, at the best, and there are oftentimes clouds come in, and interpolate themselves, between Christ and us: but then wee shall see him *face to face*, and never shall there cloud come between Christ and us to all eternity. There wee shall see him in his *Glory*, his full discoveries.

Here wee enjoy him but in part. The distance is great betwixt him and us. All which distance doth arise from that within us. Were it not for *sin* wee might bee in *Glory*, even in *Grace*. But then wee shall enjoy him in *fulnes*.

Heaven is the place, which God hath intended to set forth himself to his People in his *Glory*, to all eternity. Where there shall bee no fears, no sin, never smoak of distrustfull thoughts shall arise more. Where there shall bee no sorrow, no tears. All sighing and sobbing shall pass away, and nothing but joy shall keep the house.

Wee are now the Sons of God. But it doth not yet appear what wee shall bee; for wee shall see him as hee is.

§ Sign. 101

A heart taken with Christ thinks nothing too much to do, nothing too much to suffer for Christ.

You know Love cannot be posed. Wee say, there is no difficulty in Love. Things impossible to others, are easie to them who love. And things burthensome to others, delightfull to them who love. If once thy heart bee taken with Christ, thou wilt think nothing too much to do, nothing too much to suffer for him.

As Christ thought nothing too much for us, because his heart was taken with us, neither shall wee think any thing too much for Christ.

Wee read how prodigall the Saints have been of their Riches, their Blood, their Lives for Christ, because they loved him.

They have not accounted their estates too dear for him, Heb. 10. 34. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods.

They have not accounted their lives too dear, Rev. 12. 11. They loved not their lives to death for him.

If they must dig in Mines, or be cast to bee devoured by Wild-Beasts for Christ, as it was the usual sentence of Christians in the primitive times, they were willing to do and suffer it.

Christiani ad metalla ad Be-
stias.

See this in the Virgin of whom Basil speaks, who was condemned to death, because shee would not worship Idols.

And the like of old Polycarp and others.

This is certain: A soul taken with Christ knows no difficulty in its love. It loves him with an unlimited and unscribied love, which no duty, no difficulty can pose.

Sign. 102
A heart taken with Christ is exceedingly cast down with the withdrawings and absence of Christ.

The comforts of the soul are laid up in Christ: and when hee is gone, all is gone. Comfort gone, Joy gone, the Heart gone with him.

As Mephibosheth said, Take all, now my Lord is come back: so the soul saith, Take all, take the World, take Riches, take Heaven, and Glory, so far as Heaven and thou are two things. That my Lord may return with my soul. Darknes is terrible to the soul, and this is thick darknes, and therefore saith with Absalom, let mee see his face, mea non profunt sine te, nothing besides thee, can either satisfie or profite mee.

Sign. 103

10.9. Sign. 2

A heart taken with Christ is fully content and satisfied with the enjoyments and possession of Christ.

The possession of the thing beloved doth content the soul so far as there is satisfaction and contentment with it. The reason why wee do not meet with full contentments and satisfactions here in the possession of our loves, is because they want of *fulness*.

But now it is not so with *Christ*. Hee is able to brim the soul, to satisfie the spirit, to answer all the desires of the heart; and therefore the heart taken with him, needs must rest satisfied and contented with him.

Such a gulf of desire is in the soul of men, that if God should cast in a *thousand* worlds, there would bee no contentment, except *Christ* bee cast in. And *Christ* is so full contentment, that if God bestow him, they will neither need nor desire any more.

And thus much shall serve for the use of tryal; wee will now come to an use of *Exhortation*; and conclude this.

Use of Exhortation.

1. To them of his Church.

2. To them who are not of the Church.

1. To them of his Church.

Is it so that the heart of *Christ* is so much taken with his Church and People?

1. Direction
to them of the
Church.

1. Walk suitably to this love. Dignities, and suitable walkings to dignities must go together.

Now this suitable walking wee will expresse in these five things.

1. Walk chearfully. 2. Walk thankfully. 3. Walk humbly. 4. Walk watchfully. 5. Walk obediently.

1. Walk chearfully. Walk as Heirs of such a Mercy. Here is a truth speaks comfort, when all the world speaks nothing but terror.

2. Direction
to them of the
Church.

2. Beware of abusing this love. Precious things are committed to us by a word of *Caution*. This is a precious Truth; and therefore let mee adde to it this word of *Caution*. Beware of abusing this Love of *Christ*.

Christ's Love are his bowels; and hee will never indure to have his bowels injured; his love abused. You know a man will not have his *Love* injured; the abuse of his power, of his wisdom, greatness, doth not touch a man so nearly, as the abuse of his *Love*. This is an injury men cannot indure.

So to speak after the manner of men, *Christ* can least indure his

his Love should be abused. There is no abuse like it. Therefore beware of it.

Now this Love of Christ is injured these wayes, and beware

1. *When wee slight the intreaties, reject the tenders, cast aside the offers and beseeches of his Love.*

When love stoops to you, when the mercy and goodness of Christ doth as it were, *come on its knees* to you, and intreats you to do this, or not to do that.

And yet you will stop your ears, pull back your shoulder, slight the intreaties. This is an abuse.

2. *When the Love of Christ doth slacken our hearts to duty, loosen our engagements, makes us more remiss to or in service.* This is to abuse his Love.

Wee should reason from *Mercy to Duty*, and not from *Mercy to Liberty*. Abundance of *Grace* calls in for abundance of *Duty*.

The Love of Christ should constrain us, as the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5.

This should make us live more humbly, more actively, more studious to please, more diligent to obey, more carefull to serve him.

This should make us live at higher rates for Heaven, more spiritual, more heavenly minded. It is a *Cord* let down from Heaven, to fetch our souls up thither.

And doth this cause us to be more remiss, more careless? Doth this, which should *quicken*, *slacken* our hand to duty? *Oh base ungrateful neglect of Love!*

3. *when wee take heart to sin thereby. Grow more loose, careless.* This is an high abuse of this Love.

Because *God is Good*, wilt thou be *Evil*? because hee is *Merciful*, wilt thou be *sinful*? because hee is *Gracious*, wilt thou be *impious*? What fearful abuse of Love is this! This is to wound Christ in the house of his friends.

To return good for good, is but *Humane*.

To return evil for good, is *Wicked*.

To return good for evil, is *Christian-like*. But

To return evil for good, and the greatest evil for the greatest good, *Sin for Love*, this is *devilish*.

Were you his enemies, hee knew how to deal with you; hee could revenge himself, and the abuses of his love upon you: but you are his friends, and those bowels which you wrong, are stirred in him, when hee goes about to punish you. *Oh Ephraim! How shall I give thee up! how shall I deliver thee, Israel! my bowels are turned within mee. My repentings are kindled together, Hos. 11. 8.*

The greatness of God prevails with wicked men; that awes them often, that they dare not sin against him. But the goodness of God; this should prevail with us, *There is mercy with thee*; therefore thou art to be feared,

It is set down as the Principle in such, with whom the heart
(N) of

of Christ is taken, *Hos. 3. ult.* They shall fear the Lord, and his goodness, in the latter dayes.

None but venomous spirits will suck poison from such a sweet, as thence to draw encouragements to sin, from that which is the great encouragement to service.

The Love of Christ had so prevailed with *Chrysostome*, that hee used to say, *Ego sic censeo, sic assidue pradisabo.*

And *Anselme*. That if on the one hand hee should see sin, and on the other, the torments of Hell: hee had rather chuse to fall into Hell, than fall into sin.

4. When wee stagger and doubt, give way to misgiving thoughts of Christ's Love, and unbelievings of our own hearts: wee abuse this Love.

What is it possible that Christ should do or suffer more than hee hath done and suffered to perswade your hearts of his Love?

If Christ should ask the question of you, who doubt most of his Love. *What shall I do to answer your scruples: to satisfie your souls for ever, in this, that I love you?* could you rationally desire more than what hee hath expressed in his words, and to your heart, and if notwithstanding all bee in vain, may hee not justly say as *David* of *Nabal*. Surely in vain have I done all this, when this all commeth to nothing.

1 Sam. 25. 21.

3. Direction
to them of the
Church.

3. Bee much in the contemplation of this Love of Christ. Dwell upon this. This Love of Christ will be matter of eternal perusal in Heaven. Wee shall do nothing but read over this Love. Oh! let us not bee strangers to it now.

View it in the

1. Fullness.
2. Freeness.
3. Bounty.
4. Perpetuity thereof.

1. Measure it in the Fullness of it. It is a Love which reacheth to every necessity.

A love able to make you holy, and able to make you happy. Thou art under guilt and sin; thou art terrified by the one, and ashamed and confounded because so loathsomely defiled by the other. Why

It is a pardoning, a purging, a sanctifying Love; it is a Love as large as himself, though the persons beloved bee finite.

2. Read it over in the Freeness of it.

1. It was an undeserved,
2. It was an unsought-for Love.

1. It was an undeserved Love. Wee may provoke him to anger, but wee cannot tempt him to love. The former doth arise from our sins, the latter from himself.

His chusing, justifying, adopting, saving love, all are free.

2. It was an unsought-for Love. Never a prayer put up for it. *I am found of them that sought mee not, Isa. 65. 1.*

3. Read

Amat Deus,
non aliunde
hoc habet.

3. Read it over in the *Bounty* and *Expressions* of it.

1. *What hee did.*
2. *What hee suffered.*
3. *What hee hath given to his Church.*
4. *Look upon it, in the Perpetuity, Permanency, and con-*

tinuance thereof. A Love which reaches from *Eternity* to *Eternity*. From *Eternal chusing*, to *Eternal glorifying*. An unchangeable Love.

Let us then peruse this Love. Read it over in all the *Dimensions*. Dwell upon the thoughts of it till your hearts bee *Humbled, melted, inabled, in-nobled, winned, quickened, comforted, &c.*

The Thoughts of this Love are

1. *Soul-humbling Thoughts.* Nothing layes the soul lower than Love. The consideration of this will vile a man to Hell, *Ezek. 36. 25*, to *33.* where you may read some expressions of love, how it affects.

These would bee

2. *Soul-melting Thoughts.* They will not only *humble*, but *melt*, not only *break*, but *dissolve the heart*. Nothing doth melt the soul more than Love.

The *Law* may break us; but it is as the breaking of a flint; every dust retains hardness: but it is the Gospel that melteth us.

The thoughts of *Gods Justice* do stone the heart, make it more hard: but the thoughts of *Gods Mercy* do melt the heart.

You know you never mourn indeed, till *Love*, till *Mercy* do melt you. Every drop of tears sticks like an hailstone, and congeals in the eyes: but when Love comes in, then all the springs are opened, and a man is dissolved into waters.

So much apprehensions of this Love of *Christ*: so much godly sorrow. They are like the *Fountain* and the *Stream*, whereof the one doth rise no higher than the other.

The thoughts of this Love have

3. *A Soul-inabling Power.* It will not only ingage us to service; (as the *Apostle*. *The Love of Christ constrains mee.*) But it will *inable* us to service; make us pray, and pray with affections, pray with life, make us hear, and hear with strength. This puts us upon work, and puts life, vertue and vigor into our actions.

No actions stronger than those that come from Love: Things incredible and impossible to others, are yet easy to them who love.

See what the Saints have gone through, what they have *done*, what they have *suffered*. Let but the thoughts of this love lye on your spirits a little, and you will finde that Love is strong as death, *Cant. 8. 6.* and will mightily carry us through that, which otherwise may seem impossible.

They will bee

4. *Soul-innobling thoughts.* They will make you like themselves. Whatever the soul feeds on, the soul is digested into the nature of it. So here, feed on the thoughts of this love, and your spirit will be digested into it. *Whiles wee behold as in a glasse the glory of the Lord; wee are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3. 18.*

In nature the meat is digested into the nature of the eater. Here the eater is turned into the nature of the meat. The contemplation of his Glory makes you glorious.

They will be

5. *Soul-winning Thoughts.* Love you know is of an attractive nature. Nothing wins more than Love. Love is the Loadstone to draw Love again.

As the Sun shining upon a Glasse begets a reflection of the beams back again: so the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, begets a reflection of love back again toward God. You see *Mary. Much was forgiven her*; shee had tasted of much love from God; and shee returned much love again to him. *Shee loved much.*

The Power of God doth shake the heart:

The Majesty of God doth dread the heart:

The Justice of God doth awe the heart:

But it is the *Mercy of God*, the *Love of God*, which doth perswade, win, and draw the heart. Nothing wins a mans heart to God but his Love.

The Fear of God, dread of God, may bring a mans feet into his wayes: but it is the *Love of God*, which brings his Heart into his wayes.

They are

6. *Soul-quickenings.* 7. *Soul-comforting thoughts.*

Oh then! that wee were but wise to improve this Doctrine, this truth, to the good of our souls!

I tell thee *Christian*, if thou wouldest give this truth but scope in thy heart, it would help thee, and relieve thee of all the burdens under which thou groanest.

1. *Dost thou labour under a proud heart?* this would humble thee.

2. *Dost thou labour under a dejected heart?* this would raise thee.

3. *Under a dark heart?* this would comfort, revive thee.

4. *Under a dead heart?* this would quicken thee, and put the Spirit of Heaven into thee, whiles thou art on earth.

5. *Under an hard heart?* this would break thee. Nay this would melt thee, dissolve thee into waters.

I say, the more thou gets up (with *Elijah*) into this Chariot of love, the more would the mantle of sin and corruption depart from thee.

6. *Under a worldly heart?* This would dead thy heart for ever to the World, and set thee all on flame with the fire of heavenly affections.

I am

I am confident of it; whatever a Christian desires to enjoy; whatever a Christian desires to bee rid of, if hee can but dwell upon this truth, and bee able to manage it: Hee shall have it more fully, hee shall have it more quickly than any other way.

Wouldst thou bee rid of a proud heart? wouldst thou have an humble heart? wouldst thou bee rid of a dead heart, and desirest a quick heart? wouldst thou bee rid of an hard heart, and have a broken heart? wouldst thou bee rid of an unbelieving, of a doubting, of a dejected heart, and wouldst thou bee mighty in Faith, full of comfort? Why, do but let thy soul bee carried captive with this Truth: bee but content this Truth should master thee; bee but willing to entertain it, beleve it, imbrace it. I am confident on it, all this will bee done. I may set down a *probatum est*, to it. Oh! That wee were wise to manage this Truth!

There are many look upon this but as a pleasant dream, a *Chimera*, a fiction.

And some beleve it; but slightly; there wants depth of earth.

And some there are (poor souls!) to whom the comfort of this truth belongs, who think *this is too good news for them*. They think, if they should own it, it would bee but *too great a salt for too small a Beast*; rather overturn them, than do them good; rather ruine them, than help them. And therefore they must feed upon black thoughts, upon Hell, upon justice, upon sin, upon their corruptions.

Ah! Poor souls! Satan deludes you; you take a way to undo your selves. Either to discourage you, to say there is no hope; or else to break you, that you shall never bee able to do God service.

Look as long as you will into Hell: pry as long as you will into the dark vaults of your souls: rake as long as you will into the kennel of your hearts. You shall finde nothing in Hell, but Hell, in your hearts but sin; and having found it, run from him.

That man looks too much on sin, who shutteth his eyes from a mutual interview of love between God and his soul.

And hither you must come at last, *Free-Grace must bee owned; Free-Mercy must bee acknowledged, and advanced by you; if ever you would bee saved; if ever you would bee comforted.*

You may think what you will; but sure I am,

1. There are no Christians more chearfull.
2. None are more thankfull.
3. None are more humble.
4. None are more beleevings.
5. None are more asfrow.
6. None are more couragious.
7. None more serviceable and usefull toward God and men, than they, who ly continually at the breast of the promise; than they, who

who set up Gods Free-Grace; and own that good which God makes out to them.

Thou mayest bee a Christian; but thou wilt bee a *sad* Christian, an *uncomfortable* Christian, a *dark* Christian, a *deserted* Christian, a *dead* Christian, an *unserviceable* Christian: if thou dost go on to feed upon black thoughts; and wilt not own that comfort which *Christ* tenders; imbrace that good which *Christ* speaks, and beleeve the *Riches of his Grace and Mercy to poor sinners*.

Do but sit down, and from the sight and sense of thine own unworthiness, take but occasion to advance Free-Grace and Mercy. Let there bee place for that to come in. Let those thoughts finde entertainment. And thou shalt quickly finde a strange change in thy spirit.

1. Thou, who couldest not mourn before, shall now bee able to poure out tears, as if thou wert all turned to water.

2. Thou, who before couldest not beleeve, couldest not bee comforted, wilt even think it a wonder, that ever thy heart should bee so dark, so doubtful.

3. Thou, who before wast dead, shalt now finde a spirit of life come into thee, and make thee active in the work of the Lord.

Make but the *Experiment*, and thou wilt converse more with the promise, with the Love of *Christ*, with the Free-Grace of God, whiles thou livest; if you would but remove your *unbelief*.

But who shall remove this stone? *God* alone must do it. But if this were done, this truth would let in a flood of mercy upon you; and even sink and over-whelm you in a Sea of mercy and glory; where now you go drooping, and hang down your heads, because you will not own that portion, which *Christ* hath left you; nor that comfort which *Christ* doth tender and speak to you.

4. Direction to them of the Church.

4. Direction
to them of the
Church.

4. Labour for a reciprocall affection, a mutual taking between *Christ* and us. Is *Christ*s heart taken with you? Oh! let your hearts bee taken with him. Doth *Christ* love you: Oh! do you love *Christ*. Are you dear? are you precious to him? let him bee dear and precious to you.

Whatever God doth to the soul, it makes an impression in the soul of the same to God. Hee loves us, and thereupon wee love him; so his heart is taken with us, thereupon our hearts are taken with him. You see here the *mutual Indecrmments betwixt Christ and his Church*, Cant. 5. 16.

Pauls heart was so much taken with *Christ*, that hee was ever in his thoughts, ever upon his tongue. Hee names him sixteen, or seventeen several times in one chapter, 1 Cor. 1. 1. as *Chrysostome* notes.

Peter did but let a word of *Christ* fall, and it is a door to open to further discourse of him. Hee takes occasion upon the naming of him,

him, to enter into discourse concerning him. As you see, 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8. So greatly were their hearts taken with *Christ*, that they could think nothing but *Christ*, speak nothing but *Christ*. No sentence compleat, wherein *Christ* was not part of it.

Hee was *the one* of their esteems; *the one* of their affections; *the one* of their desires; *the one* of their delights. And so ought hee to bee of ours.

Get your hearts taken with *Christ*, this will make you *Christians* indeed; this will make you humble, active, chearful *Christians*.

An heart taken with *Christ* is *Heaven on this side Heaven*. An *Heaven on Earth*. *Glory in Clay*.

It is the *Paradise*, where *Christ* delights to walk.

It is the *House*, where *Christ* delights to dwell.

It is the *Throne*, where *Christ* sits in his glory.

It is the *Habitation* of the blessed *Spirit*.

It is the *Delight* of all the blessed *Trinity*.

An heart taken with *Christ* is the humble soul indeed, is the active soul, the living soul, which breathes forth nothing but love and desire after *Christ*.

It is an heart dead to the world; for the World can never take that heart which once is taken with *Christ*. All is empty to him, whom *fulnes* fills. All is blackness where *Beauty* shines.

Oh! then get but an heart taken with him, and thou livest a *Life of Glory*, and a *Life of Grace*. This is the *Porch of Glory*, the suburbs of *Heaven*.

I told you before, there were four speciall times in which the heart was taken with *Christ*. I might adde a fifth, which I hope is our times. -- When *Christ* goes forth in his glory, for the redemption and deliverance of his Church, and punishment of his enemies: Then is the heart taken with him.

1. Taken with his *Wisdom*.

2. With his *Justice*.

3. With his *Power*.

4. With his *Mercy and goodness*. Which are the visible attributes *Christ* doth manifest in the deliverance of his Church.

You see this, *Isa.* 25. 9. when God went forth in his *Glory*, to deliver his Church, the Saints were taken with him, even to admiration, and speak glorying. Loe, *This is our God*, wee have waited for him, and hee will save us. *This is the Lord*; wee have waited, and will bee glad in his salvation.

Here was a *Triumphant song of the Church*. *This is our God*; *This* who appears so glorious, so full of Majesty. *This, This is our God*, not yours. And good reason.

1. *Christ* never appears in his *Glory* to his Church; but hee makes his Church glorious.

You see, when God delivered his Church from *Babylon*, hee did appear in his *Glory*. *Psal.* 102. 16. *When the Lord shall build*

up

up Zion, hee shall appear in his glory.

And you see, as hee appeared in his *Glory*, so hee made the Church *glorious*, Isa. 54. 11, 12, 13. (speaking of the same time.) Behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphires. I will make thy windows of Agates, and thy gates of Carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

2. Christ now comes in, with the Performance of Promises, and needs then must he be *glorious*, and the Church be taken with him.

If Christ were so glorious, when hee made those promises: what is hee, when hee comes in to make good those Promises? Christ hath reserved abundance of his *visible Glory* to bee seen by his Church, now at the end of the World.

Our Fore-Fathers have seen him but an *obscured Christ*, a persecuted and kept-down Christ. Though glorious, yet *humble-glory*. But it will not bee long before the Church see him in his *Glory*, when hee comes to destroy that man of sin with the brightness of his coming.

Blessed bee God for what our eyes see. Let us follow him with admiration with the Church. *This is our God*; follow with spiritual triumph. *This is our God*. And let our hearts bee taken with his goings forth, who is set forth in his glory now to redeem, and so deliver his Church and People.

A
TREATISE
OF THE
NATURE
AND
ROYALTIES
OF
FAITH.

BY
AMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
And MASTER of C.C.C.



LONDON:

Printed by Robert Ibbitson, for Thomas Parkhurst, and
are to be sold at his Shop over against the Great
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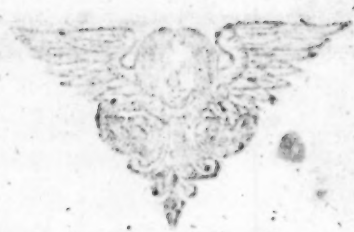
OF

FEATHERS

BY

JAMNES BOTTON, D.D.

And Master of the



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A
TREATISE
OF THE
NATURE & ROYALTIES
OF
FAITH.

JOHN 3. 15.

That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.



Have intended (with Gods assistance) to enter upon a Discourse of Faith, which might last till we come to the place, where faith shall be no more. And although my preaching of faith may end before, yet your practising of it must not. *The just shall live by faith, and the just must dye in faith.*

This Text I have chosen for the foundation of this Discourse: Which, before I come to handle in particular, I shall shew what coherence and dependance it hath with the former words. For which purpose, you must know that this Chapter, from the beginning to *Verse 22.* contains a discourse between Christ and *Nicodemus*. In which you may observe,

1. The Occasion of the Discourse.

2. The Discourse it self.

1. The occasion of this Discourse most likely, was a Question put by *Nicodemus*, which is not here expressed; but is probably implied in *Verse 3.* in that it is said, That *Jesus Answered*; and by the Answer, you may guess what the Question was. It

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may be, such an one as this, *What he must do that he might be saved?*

2. We have the Discourse it self : Which was partly continued, and partly interrupted. Continued by Christ, and partly interrupted by *Nichodemus*, in divers places, by his Objections, Cavils, and fleshly Reasonings.

This Text is a part of Christs continued discourse, and hath special relation to the foregoing verse, *As Moses lift up, &c. so must the Son of man be lifted up: Verse 14. That whosoever believeth in him, he be who he will, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Barbarian, Scythian, &c.*

Or be his sins what they will, for nature, never so hainous; for number, never so many; for continuance, never so long practised: *Yet whosoever believeth, &c.* if they believe, they shall be as readily and certainly pardoned and saved, as other less offenders.

Whosoever believeth

In which words we have,

1. The Promise.
2. The Condition of the Promise.

Or here is 1. An act, *Believe*; 2. The object, *Christ*. 3. The Fruit and Benefit that comes in thereby, 1. Negatively, *Should not perish*. 2. Positively, *But have Eternal life*.

Now about the Act and the Object, we shall make these two enquiries, before we come to lay down the Conclusion.

1. *What act of faith that is, whereby a sinner stands justified before God?*

2. *Upon what Object this Act is to be terminated?*

1. For the first, *What Act that is?* You must know, that faith in the general consideration, hath divers acts and objects, and that the acts are diversified, according to the diversity of the objects: so many particulars as are recorded in Scripture, so many particular objects; and accordingly so many particular acts there are of faith in general. But our enquiry is, what is the formal Act and Object of justifying faith?

Now for the first, *viz.* What is the formal Act of Faith? You must know, that there is much difference amongst Divines about it.

1. Some would have it to be a bare and naked assent to every truth revealed by God. Thus the Papists.

2. Some say it is a firm and radical assent to this great Proposition, That Christ is Messiah and Saviour of the world.

3. Others place it in a receiving of Christ in all his Offices, as a King, Priest, and Prophet.

4. Some in Assurance and Particular Knowledge, or Perswasion,

swasion that we are in the state of Grace, and have an interest in Christ, &c.

5. Others do place it in rowling our selves upon Christ, and resting in him, when the soul assenting to that great Proposition, that Christ is the Saviour, the Mediator, doth rowland rest it self upon him, and trusteth in him.

In most of which different opinions, we finde this agreement.

1 That it is an Act of Faith whereby wee are justified, not Faith as an Habit of Grace inherent in us, but Faith as an Act; not Faith *in actu primo* as an Habit infused, but *in actu secundo*.

2 That it is such an Act as is not wrought out of our selves, or our own Principles, but such as is wrought by the Spirit of Christ, and the mighty Power of God.

3 That it is such an Act as bringeth over the soul to the true object, to Christ, by whom wee are justified.

4 Such an one as all the benefits of Christ do belong unto; accompany Christ in blood, Christ in water, Christ for Justification, Christ for Sanctification, Christ for Salvation; in all these there is an exact agreement among them. And therefore although there bee some difference in respect of that formall Act which justifieth, yet seeing they preach, and cry down themselves, and advance and set up free grace, and mercy, both in the work and fruit of it; The Papists have no cause to cry us down for dis-agreement, which for their parts, they are like the four winds blowing in the faces of one another in many points, as might easily bee shewed, if here it were pertinent.

Wee know, that while wee are here, differences there will bee, for wee know in part; and prophesy but in part. It were an happy thing if wee could bee all of one heart, and all of one mind, but seeing it will not bee, I could wish that although wee bee not all of one mind, yet wee might bee all of one heart, and that difference in judgement, might not breed alienation in affection, especially seeing wee all aime at one thing, one mark, one end. All agree *in hoc uno*, in this one, to set up Christ, the mercy of God, free grace, and by crying down our selves, and why then should wee not agree amongst our selves?

And therefore in, all these diversities of Judgements concerning the formall Act of Faith, whereby wee stand justified before God. I shall not deal so much in the throwing down of other mens opinions, as in the establishing of mine own.

1 Because I conceive there is little wisdom in it, to uncover the nakedness of our Brethren, by bringing them in, contending with one another.

2 Because I think there is little profit in it, especially in promiscuous Congregations. Such debates being fitter for the

Schools than for the Pulpit. Polemical and Controversial points may beget Notion, little Motion; fill our heads with Notions, but not our hearts with sanctified affections. And therefore I will break my self in as plain and modest a manner as I can; amongst all these differences to declare what I adhear to, and to establish it by some Scriptures, and so passe it.

Now then I conceive that that formal act of Faith whereby wee are justified and initiated into Christ, is an Act of Affiance, and *recumbency*, *rawling resting*, *trusting on Christ for justification, and consequently for salvation*.

For the proof whereof wee are to observe, that the words both in the Old and New Testament, by which the Act of Faith is expressed, do import such an act as this.

In the Old Testament wee meet with three words especially which import this act of Faith, **נָסַח** **חָסוּ** **נָלַל** which being referred to Christ, do expresse that Act whereby wee are justified.

1 **חָסוּ** the first of them, as Rabbi Kimchi observeth, doth primitively and properly signifie to retire into some safe place for harbour or shelter; So *Judg. 9. 15.* come, **חָסוּ** (saith the Bramble) shelter or cover you under my shadow, and the Prophet useth the same word, *Psal. 57. 1.* **בְּן חָסוּיָהוּ** my soul trusteth in thee, I will retire my self under the shadow of thy wings, and so it being referred to Christ, betokeneth that Act, whereby wee do betake our selves to him as to our Sanctuary, where wee may bee preserved in safety from the tempest of Gods displeasure, and so *Psal. 2. 12.* when his wrath is kindled, yea but a little, **אֲמַר יְיָ חָסוּ בָּלְכֶם** Blessed are all they that put their trust in him, or that retire themselves to him; upon which place *Junius* noteth, that that retyring unto God, which is affirmed to bee the cause of our blessedness, is no other than sincere Faith, and what act of it, but this of affiance?

2 **נָלַל** The second word in the Old Testament signifieth to rowle; and being joyned with the Preposition **עַל** signifieth to devolve and rowle something on another, as *Psal. 37. 5.* **נָלַל עַל יְיָ וְיָחַד דְּלֹכְךָ** rowle thy way upon the Lord, and trust in him, &c. and *Prov. 16. 3.* **אֵל יְיָ וְיָחַד מַעֲשֶׂיךָ** rowle thy works upon the Lord, and thy thoughts shall bee established, agreeable to which is **יָחַד חֲסִילֶךָ עַל יְיָ**, cast thy burden upon the Lord, &c. And this word applied to Christ, imports that Act, whereby, being laden with sin, and seeking ease, wee at last discharge our load, and cast it upon Christ.

3 **בָּטַח** The third word signifieth to put confidence, trust and affiance in any thing or person; so as securely to lean and rest upon it. So *Isa. 50. 10.* **יִבְטַח בְּשֵׁם יְיָ** let him trust in the name of the Lord, **וְיָשָׁן עָן** and stay or lean upon his God, and *Isa. 26. 3.* **תִּשְׁמַר וְיָחַד שְׁלוֹמֶךָ** Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on thee, **כִּי בֶן בָּטוּחַ** because hee trusteth in thee; which word in the matter of Justification, designeth that Act, whereby, finding and feeling our own weaknes, as unable to support our selves, wee do lean and rest on Christ, as *David, Psal. 28. 7.* **יְיָ חֲזָקוֹתַי** The Lord is my strength, and my shield, **בָּטַח בְּיְיָ** trusted in him, and I am helped, &c.

And to these words in the Old Testament, wee may adde those forms of words in the New, and so wee shall finde that what in the Old is expressed by some one of these words, is in the New expressed by believing in and upon. To instance in a few,

Wee

We trust in the name of his Holiness, saith the Old Testament, Psal. 33. 21. and, He that believeth in his name, saith the New, John 1. 12, 13.

Trust in the Lord with thy whole heart, saith the Old, Prov. 3. 5. If thou believest with thy whole heart, saith the New, Acts 8. 34, 37.

In thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded, saith the Old, Psal. 31. 1. & 25. 2. and, He that believeth on him shall not be ashamed, saith the New, Rom. 10. 11. So that you see, that to Trust, and to Believe, are Synonima, import the same things, though they differ in name, yet not in nature: He that Trusteth Believeth, and he that Believeth Trusteth.

In which sense we have the phrases of Believing in or upon, 1 Pet. 2. 6. Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded: Where, by believing on him, cannot be meant any thing, but a laying and building our selves upon Christ as the foundation, that we may be made a spiritual house; as you have it in Verse 4, 5. the like we have, Rom. 10. 10. 11. He that believeth on him, and so, 2 Tim. 1. 12. For I know in whom I have believed, &c. Synonima: Whence it is apparent, that to believe in God, is as much as to commit our selves to his trust: for so it there followeth, I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, or deposited with him, or delivered up unto his keeping to that day, that is, his soul to everlasting life: So that we see, that to believe in Christ, is with confidence and trust to rely upon him. And thus much for the formal act of faith.

2. For the formal object of faith, and that not of faith at large, for so the word of God is the *objectum adequatum* of it; but as it is particularly justifying faith, *quatenus justificat*, as it properly justifieth; which is not the believing of every truth of God, but that onely which by way of eminency, is called, *The Truth*, that is, Christ himself, with all his merits, John 14. 6. and so here in the Text, *He that believeth in him*: Hence justifying faith, is often called the Faith of Christ, because he is the proper object of it, Rom. 3. 22. 26. Gal. 2. 16. 20. And faith in Christ, Acts 20. 21. and Faith in the blood of Christ: Whence I thus argue:

That Object to the Belief, of which justification and salvation is promised, that is the Object of justifying faith.

But to believe in Christ, is justification and salvation promised:

Therefore Christ is the object of justifying faith.

Thus, as briefly as I could, having shewed what is the formal both act and object of justifying faith, I shall now lay down this one Conclusion,

Doct. *That the great thing which is required at our hands for Justification and Salvation, is believing in Christ. He that believeth shall be saved.*

In the prosecution of this, we will shew,

- 1 What Faith is.
- 2 That Faith is the great requisite.
- 3 Why God hath made choice of this to be the instrument of Justification.
- 4 How Faith doth justify, whether formally, or instrumentally.
- 5 What be the Royalties of Faith.

1 What Faith is.

For the first, *What Faith is*, Wee will not define the habit of Faith, but the Act of Faith, nor every Act, but that only which justifieth. Now according to the diversity of opinions herein, such is the diversity of Definitions.

They who hold the *Assent* to be the Act of Justifying Faith, define it to be a firm and willing Assent to the truth of God in generall, and to this truth in particular, that Christ is the *Messiah* and Saviour of the World. They who hold it to be a receiving of Christ, define it to be such an Act, as whereby we receive Christ in all his offices.

But not to trouble you with these, That which I will give you is this,

Definition.

Faith is an Act of a regenerate person, whereby knowing, and assenting unto the Promises of God, and to this Truth in particular, that Christ is the Messiah or Saviour of the World, doth rest upon him for Justification, Sanctification, and consequently for Salvation.

Now to explain this Definition.

I say, that *Faith is an Act*, for wee speak not of Faith *in actu primo*, as an habit infused, and implanted in us, but *in actu secundo*, as an Act whereby wee are justified; for wee are not justified by Faith as an habit, or as a grace inherent in us, but (as I said) by Faith as an Act, as it goeth over to Christ; as wee see here the Promise is not made to the Habit, but to the Act of Faith. *He that believeth, &c.* That is the first, I call it an Act,

The subject person, so it is said to be an Act of a regenerate person, a man universally sanctified, regenerated and born again; for take Faith which way you please, for the Act or for the Habit, neither of them are before Regeneration.

1 The Act of Faith, that is not before the Habit of Faith; a thing must be *in esse* before it can be *in operari*, there must be a Habit of Faith within, before there can be the exercise of Faith without.

And this Habit of Faith is not infused before other graces; it being part of our inherent Sanctification, as infidelity is a part of our corruption, nor is it again infused alone, but together with the rest of the graces of Gods Spirit, by which wee are regenerated.

nerated. So that Faith is an Act of a regenerated soul.

A man cannot beleve till his understanding bee enlightened, and his will changed, and this is not before Grace.

Again, to beleve is an Act of a living man, not of a soul dead in sin, and therefore the soul must first bee indged with the life of Grace, before it can perform this living action.

Indeed we are said to be sanctified by Faith, and so it might seem that our Sanctification were a fruit of Faith, an effect of Faith, but wee are not to understand this as meant of the first work of Sanctification, which is not acquired or put forth by us, but infused by God, together with Faith, as being a part of it: But it is meant of the second or further work of Sanctification, and so Faith sanctifieth us, as it lends a hand to help forward, and to perfect our Sanctification, for so Faith doth strengthen and increale Grace in us, by drawing down strength and life from Christ daily, and in this sence, as to their *beneficium esse*, all our graces have a kind of dependance upon Faith; as a Mediatory grace (as I may say) as our Mediatour to our Mediatour; in fetching down influence and strength, for the strengthening and increasing of grace in us.

And therefore by the way, it may bee a good Admonition to you, when you finde any weaknes in your love, patience, or in any other grace, still to strengthen and increale Faith; whereby you may draw down from Christ strength to all the rest.

3 The third thing in the definition expresseth what this formall act is, and here wee have 1 The *essentiale Antecedens*, 2 The *essentiale constituens*.

1 The *essentiale Antecedens*, essentially pre-requisite to the justifying Act, and this is *knowing* and *assenting*, which two I might separate for the better discovery of our adversaries error, in their implicir Faith, who hold that it is sufficient for some only to beleve as the Church beleeverh, although they know not themselves any thing that they beleve, to maintain which blind Faith, they say that Justifying Faith may bee without knowledge, nay, that it were better to bee defined by ignorance, than by knowledge.

But wee must not stand to answer every thing that commeth in the way, for so wee should stay long enough at the threshold.

I will therefore joyn these two both together, as essentially pre-requisite, whereby wee know and assent to our own miserable estate, the freeness of God promise, and grace which hee hath tendred to the soul in Christ, both essentiall Antecedents to justification, of which some expound that, *John 6. 40. every one that seeth the Son and beleeveth on him, shal have everlasting life*. Where, by seeing they say is meant *Christum predicatum videre & agnoscere pro filio Dei*, to see and acknowledge Christ the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and indeed this must go before, It is *gradus ad rem*, though not *gradus in re*, it is a pre-requisite or preparatory

tory to justifying Faith, but it is not justifying Faith, as in the Generation of a man, the sensitive soul goeth before, and prepareth a fit organ for the infusion of the reasonable soul, and yet not the sensitive, but the reasonable soul doth inform, so in the reparation of man, hystorical faith doth precede, and make way for the inducement of justifying Faith, and yet not the former, but this doth justifie, as *Calvin* saith, a Vulgar knowledge and assent to truth, doth joyn a man no more to God, than the sight of the Sun doth lift a man to Heaven. Otherwise did this hystoricall assent justifie, then it as well as Justification should be proper only to the Elect; so Justification is, *Rom. 8: 30.* but so is not an hystorical assent, for that *Simon Magus* had, and other Reprobates may have.

2 *Essentiale constituents*, or that formal Act whereby wee are justified, and that is rowling or resting our selves upon Christ, or trusting on him, for they are Synonimaes; expressing the same thing in diverse words.

And that this is the formal Act of justifying Faith, I refer my self and you to what in this kinde was said before. I here only say, that that which is imputed for Righteousness, and by which wee are justified, that is the true and formall Act of justifying Faith.

But such a kind of beleeving is imputed for Righteousness, and is that by which wee are justified; so saith the Apostle, *Rom. 4. 5.* to him who beleeveeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is imputed to him for Righteousness, and *Rom. 10. 10; 11.* with t he heart man beleeveeth unto Righteousness, and in the next verse, hee Interpreteth that beleeving, by beleeving on him; for the Scripture saith, whosoever beleeveeth on him, &c.

And therefore wee conclude, so to beleeve is the justifying Act of Faith.

4 The fourth thing in the Definition, is the fruit which cometh in, or the end of this Act, and that is,

- 1 Next and immediate. Justification and pardon of sin.
- 2 Mediate. Sanctification and growth in grace.
- 3 Ultimate. The Perfection of all in Glorification.

But here some may object,

Object. 1. First, there are many who do trust, and yet are not justified: many who profess that they do this act, but yet live in their sins, as *Balaam*, &c. Therefore this is not the justifying Act.

Ans. I answer, That although every one say hee trusteth, yet every one doth not truly trust, for there is a double affiance or trust. The one is a slight and superficial affiance, grounded upon no other foundation than a great apprehension, that it is good to be saved by Christ, but yet so as neither to leave their old course, or embrace a new. The other is a settled and grounded affiance, and so qualified, as that it is not to be found in any not truly justified, if it bee, I shall yield the cause.

1. It is a holy Trust: *Jude, v. 20. Build up one another in your holy faith*; not as though holiness were required as an ingredient into faith, in the act of Justification, or giving us our first interest in Christ; but this I mean, by a holy trust, that it is such a trust as is accompanied with holiness in the root, and brings forth works of holiness in the fruit; such a faith as is accompanied with holiness in the heart, and declared in the holiness of our lives: For although it be *fides sola*, faith alone which justifieth, and gives us the first interest in Christ; yet it is not *fides qua sola* & *solitaria*, it is not a faith which is alone, but such a faith as is accompanied with holiness in the root, the graces of Gods Spirit, and holiness in the life.

The faith which doth justifie us, is not *in formis*, but *formata*; not a dead faith, but animated and quickned with grace and holiness, the whole man being sanctified.

2. It must be an unfeigned Trust, *1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 5.* There is a counterfeit and hypocritical Trust, such as never comes to God from love, but for shelter in a storm, *Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36. When he slew them, then they sought him, and yet did but flatter, &c.*

Or such a faith it is, that closeth not fully with Christ in all his Offices. They are content to have him as a Saviour; but not for a Lord; the priviledges and dignities that come in by Christ, they are willing to own, but not the duties and services which he requires. They will commit themselves to Christ to save; when in trouble, then, *Lord help*; but to the Devil to serve, *Who is Lord over us?*

Whereas now a true faith, is as careful to do its services, as to partake of its priviledges; if it throw it self into the arms of Christ, to save it; it will throw it self at the feet of Christ, to serve him, as *Paul, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

3. It must be such a Trust, as ariseth from a believing disposition within: There must be a seed and habit of faith, before there can be an act of faith: Although the acts be discerned before the habits, yet there must be a habit, a believing disposition within, before we can act. I know there are many, who in case of danger, lying upon their death bed, or some present wrack and disquiet, will make shew of doing this act of faith; but yet wanting this believing disposition within, like *Fanahs* Gourd, or the untimely fruit of a woman, or the stony ground-seed, having no root, soon withers, decays, and cometh to nothing. God respecteth not the act of faith, if it arise not from a believing disposition within; but God hath sometimes accepted of the believing disposition and desires of faith, when there hath not been strength enough to erect any vigorous act of believing: *I believe, help my unbelief.*

4. It must be a perfect Trust, *1 Pet. 1. 13. Trust perfectly in the*

the grace revealed. Perfect, I say, not in respect of the measures and degrees of Trust, there is none such here: But yet perfect in respect of the nature of it; *i.e.* there must be a full carrying of the soul over to Christ, and a full rowling and resting on him. It cannot be meant of the perfection of degrees, for there can be no such absolute perfection, to which another degree may not be added; there is none so perfect in faith, but that he may be more perfect; none so strong, but that he may be stronger; although we cannot be more justified to day, than we were yesterday, in the sight of God. For we say, that *Gratia remittens* or *justificans*, the justifying grace of God admits of no degrees, is not capable of *magis & minus*. Yet the assurance of our Justification is, a man may be more assured of his Justification to day, than he was yesterday.

As justifying faith doth imply imperfection in the subject, so the faith it self, whereby we are justified is imperfect, whilst we are here, in respect of degrees.

But in the nature of it, it must be so perfect, that it carrieth the soul over wholly to Christ alone, resting and rowling on him; for an imperfect trust in this kinde, is as good as nothing. He that doth not rest the full weight and stress of his soul on Christ, doth nothing for the matter of trust. It is not every faint stirring and moving of the heart, nor every incompleat resting, but such a full rest of the soul upon Christ, that if he fails us, we are sunk and undone for ever.

As you know a man is said to lean upon a thing, not when he bears up himself onely by his own feet, but when he rests a great part, if not the whole weight of his body, upon some thing or person else, so that if it fail, he falleth: so thus it is to lean, to rest upon Christ, to commit the whole weight and stress of our souls to him, that if he fail me, I am undone, I am lost for ever, I see I am in a miserable condition, I see he is an all-sufficient Saviour, I see that there is nothing but death in me, I see there is life enough in him, and he invites me to come over to him, he intreats, beseecheth, promiseth, and therefore I will go over to him, I will cast my self wholly on him, I will look no other way, therewill I trust, and if I perish, I perish: I will dye in his arms, I will dye believing. This indeed is that great act of faith, which entitleth us to Christ, and gives us an interest in him; even in the dusk of the morning the soul hath an interest. And therefore on the contrary, there is no readier way to be mistaken, and so to miscarry, than to trust equally to two stays, to trust to Christ, and to trust to our selves too. As there is no way whereby a man is likelier to fall, than to trust equally to two boughs, whereof the one is sound, and the other rotten; whereof if one break, it is as bad as if both did, the man is sure to come to the ground; whereas had he pitched

pitched his whole weight on the sound one onely, he had been born up. So here, in leaning both on Christ and our selves; whereas if we commit our souls, and all their burdens to Christ onely, if we fail, he sinks with us: We are sure to be upheld, the Promise, Covenant, the Oath of Christ, even Christ himself, and all would sink, if we fail.

If thy trust be thus qualified, I pronounce thee a justified person; no soul ever miscarried in a trusting way, it is such an act as doth ingage all the Attributes of God, his Justice, Truth, Mercy, Power, and all to do us good.

Object. 2. *But I have put forth this act of faith, and yet, alas, I am not justified.*

Ans. Thou sayest thou puts forth this act of faith, and thus qualified, and yet thou sayest thou art not justified. How knowest thou that? Thou sayest thou art not, because thou dost not know thou art, I know that will be the next. For thus poor hearts reason to their own discouragement, I want assurance of Justification, therefore I am not justified; I want that inward peace, and therefore fear my peace is not made with God. Though there be nothing more clear than this, that a man may have peace with God, and yet want the peace of this in himself; it is possible for a man to be justified, and yet want assurance of it within. Affiance, doth justifie in the Court of God; Assurance justifieth in the Court of Conscience; to be justified is one thing, to be assured is another.

In the object all is sure, in the subject there may be much uncertainty: It is possible for a man to put forth the act of faith, yea, and to continue in so doing, and yet walk without peace, and apprehensions of his own safety; thy condition may be safe in the promise to the eye of faith, though not to thy self in the evidence of sense. Thy condition may be safe and secure, although thou for the present dost not apprehend thy own safety, or the security of it. It is secure in the promise, in respect of God; though stormy and troubled to sense, in respect of our selves.

Thou must not therefore look for a clear day, and that the shower be over, as soon as thou hast taken shelter; nor for a calm, so soon as thou hast cast anchor: but thou must abide under the shelter, and ride at anchor, till the shower and storm be over, and wait till times of refreshment shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Godly security, and apprehensions of safety, do not ever presently attend the act of faith at the heels. Thou must stay the Lords leisure, and wait till all clouds and storms be blown over, till all doubts and fears shall vanish, *Psal 57.1.*

Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart: but, with the Husbandman, we must wait in patience, till the corn come up, and the crop come in.

The

The storm doth not cease, as soon as the ship-man hath cast anchor, the winds then may yet blow, and the tempest may be as strong, nay, it may be stronger than before; but the rock to which thou art fastned is sure, or if thy anchor hold, all is sure. Nothing shall hinder safety, though something may interrupt thy security to thine own apprehension.

To trust is the act of faith, but apprehended security is the fruit of believing, and therefore cometh not till afterward, it may be some moneths, may be some years, after long experience. Nay, it is not an inseparable fruit of believing, I mean, thy apprehended security is not: thou maist possibly never in this life reach the apprehensions of thy security, and yet thy condition may be secure. It is secure (as I said) in the promise, though not to sense, if thou dyest whilst thou ridest at Anchor, having thrown it out, and fastned it on Christ; yet thou dyest in the ship, and not in the sea; thou dyest in the Covenant of Peace, and there is safety, though the storm in this world may never cease. That which I would commend to thee, is to be much in self-purging, self-humbling, self-examination, trust much, and stedfastly to the end. Do as they did in that great storm, when neither Sun nor Stars were seen for many days, cast out anchor, and wish for day; nay, cast out two anchors (that is safest in a tempestuous night) trust and pray, that God would break into thy soul with a calm morning light; and mean while wait, and say, *When will the day break, and these shadows, this darkness, this tempest fly away.* My soul, wait thou onely upon God, for my expectation is from him, Psal. 62. 5.

Object. 3. But (say some) To believe is an act of the understanding, and is nothing else, but an Assent to the truth of Divine Revelations; which is expressed in Scripture, By receiving of Christ, John 1. 12---To as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God: even to as many as believe in his name. Where receiving of Christ (which, say they, is An act of the understanding assenting to this truth, That Christ is the Messiah, and Saviour of the world) is made all one with Believing. And so, Isa. 53. 11---By his knowledge (Notitiâ sui, not, suâ:) By the knowledge of him, shall my righteous servant justify many: which knowing is an act of the understanding also.

The like, John 17. 3---This is life Eternal, To know thee, &c. All which places do report thus much, That Faith is an act of the understanding, not of the will. And to this they alledge the testimony of the Greek Fathers; which make Faith, *Εὐμαρτυρία*: An undoubted Assent to the Doctrine of Salvation; and to this Proposition in particular, That Christ is the Messiah. So that by all this, it is clear (to them) that Faith is an act of the understanding, not of the will: But now Trust is an act of the will, and therefore cannot be the formal act of justifying Faith.

Ans.

Ans. Now, for Answer of this, we must know, that

1. *To Believe*: In the general, is no more, than *to assent to the truth of a Proposition for the Authority of the Speaker.* It is no more than *An act of the understanding, whereby we Assent to the truth of Divine Revelations.*

But we speak not of *Faith in general*, but of *justifying Faith*, of that *fermal act of Faith*, whereby we stand *justified before God.* And here we say, that--*Faith is not an act of the understanding onely, but of the will also.*

The first: It is *Too Low*: *Non pertingit ad justificationem*; as one saith, *It reacheth not so high as Justification.*

The second, *Brings the Soul over to Christ, by an act of Trust*; whereby a man is justified.

By the first, we do but *Discover the Justifying-Cause, the Fountain of Life, Christ himself.*

By the latter, we *Throw our selves into this Fountain, and draw water of life from him.*

Hence one, *None can be justified, but by union with Christ*; and the first union is by *Faith.*

By what Faith? *The Speculative act of Faith?*

No sure: This doth no more *unite the soul to Christ*, than the sight of the Sun, doth draw a man up to heaven.

By what Faith then? *But by this act of Trusting, Resting, Leaning, &c.*

Hence *Augustine--To believe in Christ, is by believing to go into Christ, and to be incorporate into his body*; which the Papists themselves will not say, is done *By a bare act of the understanding.*

In ipsum qui si totos nos immergimus.

Nullus potest justificari nisi per unionem ad Christum. Durand.

Credere in Deum, est credendo, in Deum ire.

And therefore to pals this, and come to the places alledged: Where the first is,

1 John 1. 12---*As many as received him, to them he gave power, &c.* where, say they, by *Receiving*, is meant no more but *An act of the understanding, whereby they assented to this, That he was the Mesias.*

For answer to this place, we say, That this word *Receiving*, doth not *onely denote the understanding, but implies the will also.* Which will appear by this *one Reason*, among many.

That *Receiving* is to be understood, which is opposed to the *Jews not receiving of him.* For, having said in Verse 11--*He came to his own, and his own received him not.* Immediately is added--*But as many as did receive him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God:* So that the matter of Inquiry will be, *How the Jews did not receive him.*

Was it then onely in this, *Their not assenting that he was the Mesias?* or, *Rejecting him, and Refusing him for a Saviour?*

It could not be the former, *Their non-assenting to the truth of this,*

this; That he was the *Messias*: Though it was the ground why Sundry did not receive him; yet it was not the ground, why all did not receive him.

For we read, There were divers of the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Priests, who knew right well, that he was *The Christ*: For so much do the *Husbandmen* themselves confess, in the Parable, as Christ brings them in (*Mat. 21. 38.*) saying--*This is the Heir, come, let us kill him, and seize upon his inheritance.*

And how could our Saviour justly charge them with the *Sin against the Holy Ghost*, unless they had known him to be the *Messias*? *Mat. 12. 32.* and wilfully rejected him against knowledge and conscience?

And how can any be said, *To make shipwrack of Faith*, which yet the Scripture saith some have done? *1 Tim. 1. 19.* unless you will say, *A man made shipwrack of that he never had*; except he do historically believe, as *Simon Magus*, and others did; who did not feign a Faith in words, as *Calvin* saith; but being overcome with the Majesty of the Gospel, did in a sort (*sc. historically*) believe and acknowledge Christ the Author of Life and Salvation.

Nay, and if man did not *Historically* believe, then all the sins committed against the Gospel, were only sins of Ignorance, and not against Knowledge. So that there were no sins in the Gospel against Knowledge: Nor, *Now* neither, if this be granted.

And therefore, as their *Non-Receiving* of him, was not so much an *Act of the Understanding*, whereby they Assented not to this, That *CHRIST* was the *Messiah*: But rather an *Act of the Will*, whereby they refused him to be their Saviour. As you see plainly exprest by *CHRIST*, *Luk. 19. 14.*--*wee will not have this man to reign over us.* So *Mat. 23. 37.*

So that their *Receiving* of him was not a bare *Act of the Understanding*, whereby they Assented to this, That *CHRIST* was the Saviour: But an *act of the Will*, whereby they chose him, embraced him, rested and trusted upon him as a Saviour.

And therefore, seeing this *Act of Receiving* of *CHRIST*, is not an *act of the Understanding*, but an *act of the Will* embracing him, trusting on him: And that this *Receiving* is *Beleeving*, as the Evangelist saith.

Therefore *To beleeve* is to trust.

To the other places, *Isa. 53. 11.* & *John 17. 3.* where Faith seems to be an act of the Understanding. As -- By his Knowledge shall hee justify many. And -- This is eternal life. To know thee, &c.

Wee are to understand them *Senectochically*: where part is set down for the whole: The whole nature of Faith being implied in those Phrases.

These Phrases are *Hebraismes*: In which language, words of

of Knowledge and Sense, do imply the Will and Affections. They do not only signifie the Act of the mind and Sense, but imply the Will and Affections too.

As you see, Psal. 1. 6. -- The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous; That is, The Lord loveth; The Lord approveth of the way of the Righteous.

So where it is said. -- Depart from mee, I know you not. That is, I love you not; I allow not of you; I approve you not.

And so may that place in Isa. 53. 11. bee interpreted. *It doth not only signifie the knowledge of the person, and benefits of Christ, but resting and trusting upon them; Such a Knowledge of Christ, as is mingled with Faith, and works our Wills: to accept of CHRIST, to trust in him. CHRIST, being so known, (as to bee Embraced, Rested upon, Trusted upon) shall justifie many. Hee speaks of such a Knowledge of CHRIST as is joyned with Faith.*

Non solum agnitionem Personæ, & beneficiorum Christi significat; sed etiam Fiduciam quiescentem in Christi.

And, to the Testimony of the Fathers alledged. As wee will not Resolve our Faith into the Authority of any, though never so eminent in the Church: So, No Authority shall bear us down in this matter, if it bee not Consentaneous, and Agreeable to the Word of Truth. It is no matter what others have taught before us, but what CHRIST himself (who was before all) hath taught, who is Truth himself.

Nil refert quid hic, aut ille ante nos docuerit; sed quid est, qui ante omnes est, CHRISTUS. Ciprian.

So that, seeing this is not manifested, I might refel them with the same ease, as they are alledged.

But, seeing Authority is stood upon; And I reverence Authority, when it is with God.

And that Authority doth make Faith nothing, but An Act of the Understanding, whereby wee assent.

Wee will in the same way overthrow that, by setting Authority against Authority, Weight against Weight: That, if nothing will bee said for us: so nothing may bee said against us. One may balance the other, if not weigh it down.

Now, that it is An Act of the Will also, let us hear Augustine's -- *Fides sine Voluntate non potest esse. Et Fides in Credendum Voluntate consistit: Faith lyes in the Will.* Again. -- *Voluntate utique credimus: Verily wee beleeve with the Will. Credere non potest, nisi Volens.* August. upon John 6. 44. God makes a man willing before hee can beleeve. A man may receive the Sacrament against his Will, pray against his Will. But hee cannot beleeve against his Will, said Augustine.

Another, -- *It were not Vertuous to beleeve, if it were not voluntary. -- Ipsum velle credere, est. essentielle Fidei. To beleeve willingly, is essential to Faith.*

Another upon Rom. 10. -- *With the heart man beleeves, upon which hee saith -- Signanter dicit, Corde creditur, id est Voluntate: Hee saith remarkably, man beleeves with the heart, that is, with the Will.*

To these I might alledge many more. But these shall suffice. By which you see, That Authority is more for us, than against us.

But, leaving the Contestation, wee will come to the Issue, and conclude this.

And, To speak what I think. I conceive, that to beleeve, is not an Act of the Will only: Nor an Act of the Understanding only: But

An Act of the whole Soul.

It is so an Act of the Will, as the Understanding is folded up in it: and so an Act of the Understanding, as that the Will and Affections are joynd with it.

Hence, by some it's call'd (*Actus Complicatus*) An Act, where, in many Acts are folded up: An Act of the Understanding, An Act of the Will.

And 'tis not Absurd to mee, but very fit to say, That That Act whereby the whole Soul is justified, pardoned, purified; is an Act of the whole Soul.

As the Apostle saith. -- With the Heart man beleeueth to Righteousness, So that, *In Intellectu habet Initium, In Voluntate Complementum*: It begins in the Understanding; It is compleat in the Will and Affections.

All that I know of moment against this, will beee this, That wee shall seat Faith in diuerse faculties, which is improper.

Now, for the Answer, or removing this, wee say

1 That Distinction of Faculties is a Philosophical Opinion, and not received by all. So that the Will and the Understanding are two distinct Faculties, is an Opinion not received by all. Many there are that make them more Notional than Real: As the East, West, North and South in the Heavens. Not that there are such things, but that such things are feigned, for our clearer Understanding.

It is thought by many of good worth, that *Anima intelligit in intellectu: Eligat in Voluntate, &c.* That there's no such distinction of Faculties: But that the same Soul doth Understand in the Understanding, Will in the Will: Doth Understand, Will, Love, and do all.

And there's Scripture for it, where wee read all these Acts attributed to the Soul it self: As namely an Understanding Heart, A willing mind, &c. And therefore seeing it is a bare Philosophical Opinion, and not received by All, This will not overthrow, nor strengthen any Divine Truths.

2 Though this were true, That there were distinction of Faculties: yet, I say, Making of Faith an Act of the whole Soul, of the Understanding, Will and Affections: There's no Necessity will follow thereupon, of planting it in diuerse and distinct Faculties.

Why may it not beee Planted and Subiected in the Heart: which is the proper seat of Faith, as well as of other Graces.

As others, who have made *The Formall Act of Faith*, a willing Assent, which is both *An Act of the Will and Understanding*, to avoid the seating of the *Habit in diverse Faculties*, have placed it in the *Mind*, which, (say they) comprehends the *Understanding* and the *Will*:

So wee here; To avoid the like, do seat it more properly in the *Heart*. And therefore that absurdity of seating Faith in diverse Faculties will not follow on us; Though wee say, That this *Act of Faith*, whereby wee are justified, Bee such an *Act*, wherein many other *Acts* are folded up: *The Understanding assenting, The Will trusting, &c.*

Object. 4 But to believe, is to bee assured. And therefore it is not to trust.

Ans. I say, That to believe, is not to bee assured. And to bee assured, is not to believe. Faith is not Assurance, Nor is Assurance Faith, as many have held.

I will not trouble you with the Controversie; only I will infer these things.

1 If Assurance were the *Act of Faith*, whereby wee are justified: Then where there's no Assurance, there's no Faith. This were an hard Consequent. Nay, then, *Whoever lives and dyes without Assurance, cannot bee saved. They who live and dye without Faith cannot bee saved, And if Faith were Assurance: Then, Whoever lived and dyed without Assurance could not bee saved.* Which far bee it from mee to hold.

2 That which is a Consequent of justifying Faith, is not Justifying Faith. This is plain.

But Assurance is a Consequent of Justifying Faith. It is that, which follows it,

1 Sometimes in order of Time.

2 Always in order of Nature.

1 Sometimes in order of Time, 1 John 5. 13. -- These things have I written unto you, that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you might know, that you have Eternal life: where you see Believing goes before, and Knowing or Assurance follows after. It is not contemporary with Faith, but follows it.

2 Always in order of Nature. As wee say, The Truth of a Proposition is ever in order of Nature, before the Knowledge of the Truth of it, Things must bee in esse, before they can bee in Cognosci: Things must Bee, before they can bee known to Bee: So there must bee pardon of sins, before there can bee Assurance of pardon. A man must bee Justified, before hee can bee assured hee is Justified. Justification must needs go before the Apprehension of Justification.

Now, that which apprehends Justification, is not Justifying Faith, but follows it: For Apprehension follows Justification. No man can truly apprehend himself to bee Justified, till hee bee Justified.

But

But *Justifying Faith* is in nature before *Justification*. And therefore, unless wee should say, that *That which follows, is That which goes before*; wee cannot say, that *that which apprehends Justification, is Justification*: And by Consequence, *Assurance* is not that *Faith* which *Justifies*.

3 Again. If to beleeve were to bee assured that wee are *Justified*, and our sins pardoned: Then it will follow; *God commands us to beleeve an untruth*.

Why, How will that follow?

Thus, *Because God commands every one to beleeve, 1 Joh. 3. 23. This is his Commandement, that wee beleeve on the name of his Son JESUS CHRIST.*

Now, If to beleeve were to bee assured, wee are *Justified*, and our sins pardoned: Then *God commands to beleeve an untruth: That our sins are pardoned, before they are pardoned: That wee are Justified, before wee are Justified.*

Nay, Such as are *Reprobates*, and shall never bee pardoned: If to beleeve, were to bee assured of pardon; Then, I say, *God commands them to bee assured of pardon: And so commands to beleeve a lye, an untruth.*

There is

1. *The Act of Faith, and*

2. *The Fruit of Faith.*

The Act of Faith is, To cast our selves on CHRIST, to rest, to trust on him.

The Fruit of Faith, is Justification, pardon of sin, Reconciliation.

Now *God commands no man to beleeve the Fruit of Faith, untill hee hath done the Act of Faith. Hee commands no man to beleeve hee hath an interest in the Promise, till hee hath performed the condition of the Promise.*

The Promise runs upon this condition. Hee that beleeves, shall receive remission of sins, A&C. 10. 43. A&C. 16. 31.

To the first *Act of Faith*, *All men indeed are tyed under pain of damnation, Mar. 16. 16. Joh. 3. 18. The World shall bee condemned for unbelief. And there's no condemnation, but upon breach of some Commandement. And therefore all men are tyed to do the first Act.*

But now to the latter, *none are tyed, but such as have done the former.*

The first is the condition of the Promise: or, *The Duty. The second is the Benefit, or Fruit of the Promise.*

So that wee conclude this: That

Assurance is not the Act of Faith whereby wee are justified before God: But yet, That whereby wee are justified in our selves: in the Court of Conscience.

Wee are said to bee *Justified* in three Courts.

1 In foro Dei: In Gods Court.

2 In foro Conscientiæ: in Court of Conscience.

3 In foro Communi: In the Court of men.

1 In the Court of God; It is not Assurance: But Faith, Affiance, trust, that doth Justifie.

2 In the Court of Conscience; It is not Faith, but Assurance which Justifies. Where the *ΣΥΝΙΣΤΗΝΤΙΣ*, or first Proposition is the undoubted Word of God, -- hee that beleeves shall bee saved. The *ΣΥΝΙΣΤΗΝΤΙΣ*, or Assumption is the Testimony of our own spirit, with that word. The *ΚΕΛΛΙΟΝ*: is the verdict, and Testimony of the SPIRIT of God, testifying with our spirit, according to the word, whereby wee have Assurance.

In the Court of men: It is not Faith, nor Assurance, that Justifies; but works.

Object. 5 But you will say. If Assurance bee not the *ΑΙΤΙΑ* whereby wee are justified, Because it is a Fruit of Justifying Faith: Much less can Trust bee the *ΑΙΤΙΑ* of it, because it is the Fruit of Assurance.

That, which is the Fruit of Assurance, cannot bee the *ΑΙΤΙΑ* of Justifying Faith.

But this Trust and Affiance is a fruit of Assurance; Assurance is the cause, and works Affiance as the Effect.

Therefore Trust or Affiance, cannot bee the Act of Justifying Faith.

Ans. Assurance is twofold,

1 Principiorum, of Principles.

2 Conclusionum, of Conclusions.

The first, The Assurance of Principles is no more but such a grounded, undoubted Assurance as Beleeves the main Proposition of the Gospel: as, -- Hee that beleeves shall bee saved.

The second; The Assurance of Conclusions, is such an Assurance as is necessarily deduced from the word, by Application, in a practical Syllogism, after this manner.

Hee that beleeveeth shall bee saved.

But I beleeve.

Therefore I shall bee saved.

The first is, The Assurance of the Object.

The second is, The Assurance of the Subject.

The first, Of the thing beleeved.

The second, Of the Beleever,

The first is, The Assurance of the general Proposition -- whoever beleeves shall bee saved; which is called -- (*πληροφορία τῆς συνιςτας*, 2 Col. 2. The full Assurance of Understanding, or Knowledge, which is the Plerophory of Assent to the Truth of the Gospel, touching CHRIST a Saviour.

The second is, *πληροφορία πιστεως*, The Assurance of Faith, Heb. 10. 22. And that is, when wee are assured, CHRIST is OUR SAVIOUR.

The first goes before the Act of Trust.

The

The second follows the Act of Trust.

And this *Act of trusting and resting upon CHRIST*, is the ground of such Assurance,

Object. But you will say, *How shall wee rest upon CHRIST for Salvation, unless wee bee first assured of Salvation by him?*

Ans. Indeed, unless wee know *CHRIST* to bee the only Saviour, wee cannot rest upon him for Salvation. But to say, *A man cannot rest upon him for Justification and Salvation, except hee know hee is already Justified, and shall bee saved: I see little sense for that.*

May not a man trust upon his friend, who hath ingaged himself, and promised to do such a thing for him, untill hee knows it were already done for him? So here. May not the Soul rest upon *CHRIST*, who hath promised pardon and forgiveness to them that trust on him, except it first knew, that *CHRIST* had already pardoned, and forgiven him?

The ground of this mistake, I conceive to arise from one of these two grounds.

- 1 That they take *TRUST* for *ASSURANCE*; or
- 2 That they take *TRUST* for a *FRUIT* of *ASSURANCE*: And so all one with *HOPE*.

Now, for the clearing of the first, you must know, that *TRUST* doth signifie these two things.

- 1 *Ipsium Actum Innitendi*, the very act of leaning, &c.
 - 2 *Consequens effectum Fidei*, the consequent Effect of Faith.
- 1 It signifies that very act of Leaning, Resting, Rowling on *CHRIST*, which is properly the act that Justifies.
- 2 Sometimes it signifies, the consequent Effect of Faith; as full assurance, and perswasion; the lively sense of pardon, and remission of sins.

But when wee speak of that act of Trust, which Justifies, wee mean not Trust in this second Acception; For this is not Justifying Faith: but *Fidei Justificantis Filia*: the Daughter of Justifying Faith, which comes after much sweat and pains in the work of God, trial and experience of our selves, and truth of our Graces.

But wee speak of Trust in the first Acception; the resting and rowling of the soul upon *CHRIST*.

The former wee say is the act of justifying Faith: and proprius actus *Fidei justificantis*: the most proper act of justifying Faith.

The latter wee grant is the fruit of the former Trust, and Assurance; both set down by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 1. 12. -- *I Know* (saith the Apostle) *whom I have beleaved*: ὃν πεπιστεύκα: *whom I have trusted*, or committed my soul unto, There is the first act of Faith. -- *And I am perswaded that hee is able to keep that which I have committed to his trust, to eternal life*, There's the second act of Trust. Hee will bee all this to mee, which I have Trusted to him for.

1. *I know*] There was *Hyſtorical Faith, Affent.*
2. *Whom I have truſted* or committed my ſoul to. There was *juſtifying Faith.*
3. *I am perſwaded.*] There was the fruit of it.

To the firſt Act there concurs,

1. *A diſcovery of our own emptineſs.*
2. *A Diſcovery of CHRIST'S fulneſs for Juſtification.*
3. *A caſting of the Soul upon him, for Juſtification and*

Salvation: Going out of our ſelves, and caſting our ſouls upon *Chriſt.*

To the ſecond Act, there is required,

1. Not only a *Knowledge*, that hee is a *Saviour.*
2. But alſo, a *Knowledge* that hee is *My Saviour*, upon whom *I truſt*, or *I am perſwaded of Salvation* by.

The ſecond miſtake is, That they take *Truſt* for a fruit of *Aſſurance*. And ſo no ore but *Hope*. *Propter Spem Roboratum:* for ſtrengthened *Hope*.

Anſw. That this act of *Truſt*, which wee make *juſtifying Faith*, is not an act of *Hope*, but doth differ from *Hope*, or that aſſurance which they make *Hope* ſtrengthened; In this,

1. That *Hope* looks to the end, which is *Salvation*: But this act of *Truſt*, looks to the *Means*, which brings to the end, and that is *Chriſt*.

2. The act of *Hope* is to *expect*: But the act of *Truſt* is to lean, and reſt.

3. The Object of *Hope* is, *Bonum Futurum*, a Future Good: But the object of *Truſt* is, *Bonum Preſens*, a Preſent Good.

This act of *Truſt* doth reſt upon *Chriſt*, *Non per modum expectantis, ſed per modum poſſidentis*, not by way of *Expectation*, but by way of *Poſſeſſion*. As — *Hee that beleeveth in the Son hath life.* It is not ſaid, -- *Hee ſhall have life*, but -- *Hee hath life*: not in *Spe*, but in *Re*; not in *Hope* only, but in *Hand*; The life of *Righteouſneſs*, and *Juſtification* in *Hand*: The life of *Glory* and *Salvation* in *Hope*.

And thus much ſhall ſerve for the firſt thing, what *Faith* is. In which, I hope, moſt of the controverſie is over.

2. Wee now come to the ſecond, *That Faith is the only requiſite, whereby wee ſhould be juſtified, and ſaved.*

I ſhall not need to ſtand long on it.

1. *Union, and Communion with Chriſt is requiſite to Juſtification and Salvation.* There was no way whereby wee ſhould bee *Juſtified*, whereby wee ſhould bee ſaved: But only by vertue of our *Union, and Communion with Chriſt*.

1. No other way, but by vertue of our *Union with Chriſt*. In our ſelves wee were dead Branches, and grew upon a dead ſtock; and there was no help, nor hope for us, till wee were cut off from our own ſtocks: the ſtock of Nature; And were ingrafted into

Christ, who is the Stock of Life. Hence the Apostle. -- Hee that hath the Son hath Life, and hee that hath not the Son, hath not Life. Hee that is united and ingrafted into Christ, hath Life, the Life of Justification here, and shall have the Life of Glorification hereafter. -- But hee that hath not the Son -- Hee, who is not united to Christ, hath not Life: Nor the Life of Justification here: Nor the Life of Glorification hereafter. So that you see, there is no Hope of Life, or Justification, except wee bee united to Christ; who hath all Life in him. There's nothing but death in the World, out of him: And there's no way to have Union with Christ, but by Faith, which is one bond of our Union with Christ.

It is Faith that unites us to Christ, as Members to the Head. And being Members of Christ, God pardons us.

If a Malefactor had committed treason against a King, and were adjudged to lose his hand, or his eye. If hee could now make his Hand, or his eye which hee were to lose, to become the Hand, or the eye of the Kings Son: Hee should bee spared; hee should not lose them: They were the hands and the eyes of the Kings Son: And the King would spare them for his Sons sake: So here.

Wee were guilty of Treason, were condemned to death. Now this is the dexterity of Faith, to make our selves to bee Members of Christ: It is Faith that doth ingraft us into Christ, whereas before wee grew upon dead stocks: now being ingrafted into the stock of Christ, the stock of Life, wee have Life derived to us.

It is Faith that marries us to Christ; and being married to him, hee answers all our debts.

It is by Faith wee put on Christ, by Faith wee are built on Christ, as the House on its Foundation.

And therefore, seeing there is no way to bee saved, but by our Union with Christ. And there is no Union but by Faith. Therefore it follows, Faith is the great requisite whereby wee must be saved. That for Union.

2. For our Communion with Christ, Faith is necessary. There is no way to bee saved, but by vertue of communion with the Righteousness of Christ.

1 Not by our own, any done by us, or wrought out of our selves. This is too short. -- A menstruous ragge. A ragge, and not able to cover us, as a Garment too narrow for us. Wee cannot weave a web of Righteousness of our own, able to cover us; wee shall but adde sin to sin.

2. Not by Righteousness of Saints, or Angels.

1. Theirs is incommunicable. There's no way, whereby wee should have communion with it. They are not of our Natures, to wit, the Angels. There must bee an union of Nature, before there can bee communion. Nay: But were it communicable: yet it were insufficient. It is but a finite Righteousness, and therefore not

not able to answer an infinite debt.

If the least sin did lye upon the back of the tallest Angel in Heaven, it were not enough. All the Righteousnesses hee hath would not bee enough to save him from Hell. And therefore theirs can do us no good.

To make short of it.

There's no way to bee justified, and saved, but by Communion with the Righteousness of Christ; the Righteousness of his active and passive obedience: *Obedientia Legis, Obedientia Crucis.*

1. The one, *In Pretium.*

2. The other, *In Præmium.*

By the one, answering Gods condemning Justice.

By the other, answering God commanding Justice.

By the one, satisfying his vindictive Justice, whereby he did bear our scourges.

By the other, answering Gods remunerative Justice, whereby hee did perform our services.

Now there was no way to have Communion with the Righteousness of Christ, but by Faith.

Faith gives us Union with Christ. And by vertue of our Union, wee have Communion with him.

As, by vertue of our Oneness with the first Adam, His sin was made ours: So, by vertue of our Oneness with the second Adam, His Righteousness is made ours.

Faith makes us Members of Christ. Faith unites us to Christ. And, by vertue of our Union with him, as the Members with the Head, wee have derived from him Life and Spirit, Sense and Motion.

Wee have communion with him, In his Wisdom to direct us; In his Righteousness to justify us; In his Holiness to sanctifie us; In his Redemption to glorifie us. -- Christ is made to us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

Faith ingrafts us into Christ, as the Branch into the Vine. And by vertue of our ingrafture into him, wee draw forth life, strength, and nourishment from him, who is our root.

By Faith wee put on Christ, and so have communion with the Robes of his Righteousness, whereby wee stand justified in Gods sight.

As Jacob got the blessing by his elder Brothers apparel: So wee by the Robes of Christ, which are called *Amiquera* the day: *The Righteousness of Saints.*

By Faith wee are married to Christ, and by vertue of this marriage, wee have communion with all his Riches, as the Wife hath with her Husbands Estate: And Christ hath communion with all our debts.

So that you see, Faith is that Grace, which gives us union with Christ. And by vertue of that union with him, we have communion with all of Christ.

It gives us communion with the Righteousness of Christ. Hee is -- The Lord our Righteousness. And by Faith, it is as truly ours, to save us, as his, to glorification.

It gives us communion with the Life and Spirit of Christ: with the death and sufferings of Christ; with the merits and victories of Christ; with the privileges and immunities of Christ, as adoption, Son-ship, &c.

It gives us communion with his Wisdom, to direct us, with his Power, to protect us, with his Mercy, to save us.

So that, As David said. -- God hath sworn in his Holiness -- He had made a Promise to him. And therefore hee saith -- I will rejoyce. I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine; so the soul may say, God hath said, This Son of mine I have given you, Isa. 9. 6. And therefore Christ is mine.

3. Why God should make choice of this Grace for our Justification? Not to say any thing of this, which might bee one Reason. That the Remedy might answer the Fall. The Fall was, by unbelieving. As you see, Hee gave credit, to the Serpent, and not to God. So God would make our Recovery by Faith. But this wee pass.

Wee read in Scripture of four grounds, wherefore God made choice of this Grace for the Justification of a sinner.

1. That Justification might bee of Grace,
2. That the Promise might bee sure,
3. That it might bee to all the seed.
4. That no man might boast.

The three former you shall read, Rom. 4. 16. The last, Ephes. 2. 9.

1. For the first, God made choice of this, that wee should have Justification by way of believing. That it might bee by Grace. If it had been by any other way, by reason of any thing wrought in us, or by us; If it had been by Desert, not of Grace, of Wages, not of Mercy, of Debt, not of Favour: If God had promised Justification upon any work of ours, had told us, wee must bring so much Humiliation, so much Repentance, so much brokenness of Spirit, so much Grace, so many Prayers, Alms-deeds: and then wee should bee justified: It had not then been of Grace, not of Free-Mercy.

And therefore God, For the advancement of his Free-Grace and Mercy, that wee might cry out with them in Zach. 4. 7. -- Grace, Grace. That wee might see, admire, adore, the Riches of his Grace, The height, and depth, and breadth and length of his Free-Mercy. Therefore hath God chose this way for the Justification of a sinner.

2. That the Promise might bee sure. If it had been any other way, the Promise could not have been sure.

That which makes the Promise sure, is this.

1. That it is not founded upon any thing in us. If it were, it could

could never be sure. If there were any thing besides the breast of God to be a bottom and foundation for the Promise, It could never be sure.

2. That it is not performed, nor contrived for any thing done by us, but out of his Free-Mercy and Love. If indeed, there had been any thing in us, which should have been the ground of the performance of this Promise to us: wee had been lost long ago.

If God had put us upon the condition of Obedience; and had given us *Grace*, as hee did *Adam*: yet the Law is strict, requiring an exact, Personal, Universal, and constant obedience: And every failing would have lost us, undone us for ever.

But now, When our Righteousness is in *Christ*, A Righteousness not wrought by us, but wrought by *Christ* himself, And freely given to us, upon the alone condition of *Faith*. This makes our condition sure.

3. That the Promise might be to all the seed, not to them of the Law only, but to them who were strangers to the Law of God.

God had made a promise to be the Father of *Abraham*, and of his seed.

Now this Promise could not have belonged unto us, If God had not provided a way, that wee might be of his seed. Now, according to the flesh, this was impossible: *That we should be of Abrahams seed*: and therefore by consequence, wee could have had no interest in this Promise.

And therefore God hath made *Faith* to be that *Grace*, which makes us spiritually to be the *Seed of Abraham*, that so the Promise might belong to us.

If God had made the Law the condition of the Promise: Or, if hee had made the Law and *Faith* together: yet then wee had never come to be of *Abrahams Seed*: Because wee were not under the Law.

But God having made *Faith* the *Grace*, which doth make us the *Children of Abraham*. Hence is the Promise to us, as to his seed: not to that part which is of the Law, but to that part which is of the *Faith of Abraham* — who is the Father of all that believe.

Though wee are never so far from the Law, and the kindred of *Abraham* in the flesh, yet God hath provided security for us, that wee might be his Children, and be inheritors in the Promise, which is, by *Faith*.

Therefore God chose *Faith*, that the Promise might be to all the seed, not to the flesh only, for then wee should not be of his seed, but to the Spirit.

4. The fourth Reason is, *Ephes. 2. 9. That no man might boast, That is, That no man might have cause to glory in himself, or rejoyce in himself.*

Now

Now, if it had been by any other way, by any thing done by us, wee should have gloried: And therefore God chose this way, that wee might glory alone in him, 1 Cor. 1. 30, 31. — That no flesh might glory in his presence: Christ is made Wisdome, Righteousnes, Sanctification and Redemption, that hee that glories, might glory in the Lord; Isa. 45. 24, 25. In mee you shall have Righteousnes and strength, and in mee you shall glory.

God is exceeding chary of his Glory. As in our Salvation, hee aimed at the manifestation of his Glory: So hee hath had care to bring it about in such a way wherein there may bee the Preservation of his Glory.

Now, if God had pitcht it in any other way, than in the way of Beleeving, his Glory could not have been preserved: wee would have been sharers with God, wee should have divided the spoils of Glory with him.

And therefore God chose this, which is *A mean Grace in it self*. And so his Glory shall not bee obscured, but more perspicuous, as 1 Cor. 1.

Nay, such a Grace, as doth throw a man out of himself: empties a man of himself, and casts him upon another. It is such a Grace, as makes the Soul all in another, nothing in it self: Rich in another, poor in it self, found in another, lost in it self: Saved by another, damned by it self. — I live (saith Paul) yet not I, but Christ in me. I live by the Faith of the Son of God, or Faith in the Son of God, Gal. 2. 20.

It is such a Grace as makes a man stand upon anothers bottom: live by anothers life: Rich by anothers riches: clothed by anothers Apparel: fed by anothers meat. A poor beggarly grace in it self. And therefore God chose this.

It is such a Grace, as gives God all the Glory: As it was said of Abraham — Hee gave glory to God by beleeving, Rom. 4. Hee gave glory to his Truth, to his Power, to his Wisdome, to his Mercy: So this Grace in the Justification of a sinner, it gives God all the glory, it robs him not of any peece of Glory, it gives him the glory of his Mercy, of his Truth, — Hee that beleeves, puts to his seal, that God is true. It sets up God, makes him Alpha and Omega, the beginner and finisher of all. And therefore it being a Grace that honours God above all, therefore God honours it above all other, making it the Instrument of Justification.

And therefore, my Brethren, if ever you would have pardon from him, give him the glory of his own Free-Grace.

Here is the controversie between God and man, to this day. God is willing to save us, if wee will give him his Glory: But our proud hearts will not yeeld to that, That God should bee all in all.

Every man would willingly bee something in himself, stand upon his own bottom. God is willing to give us a Righteousnes wrought

wrought out for us: But wee would have a Righteousness of our own making. Wee love the Spiders motto. -- *Mihi soli debeo.* To owe nothing to any, but to our selves.

Wee are too like that proud Papist, who said, -- Hee would not have Heaven *Gratis*, wee would merit it.

God is willing to give us objective worthiness, worthiness in another, in *Christ*. But wee would have subjective worthiness: A worth in our selves. But this will not bee allowed. God will have us poor in our selves, empty in our selves, cast out of our selves, unbottomed of our selves. Hee will have us poor, and blind, and naked, before hee will bestow mercy on us.

God will not have us bring our penny to his purchase: One dram to this fulness, one shred to this garment of *Christ*. Hee will have it by *Faith*, that so it might bee of *Grace*, that not wee, but hee might have all the Glory.

This is one Reason I am perswaded of the enlargement of our troubles of spirit, and breakings; Because wee will not let God be all in all: wee will not let God have all the Glory. Glad we should bee, to bee sharers in our own Salvation. Glad to do something. Wee would have it of *Deits*, not of *Grace*, of *Works*, not of *Faith*, of *Merit*, not of *Mercy*.

God would forgive us our debts, but wee would pay them; wee are loath to bee proclaimed Bankrupts, unable to pay. God would willingly cloathe us, but wee would make a garment of our own.

God would give us Heaven, but wee would deserve it.

God would give us pardon upon believing, that so wee might not glory in our selves, but in him: But wee would have it by way of working. That all, or at least something, might bee attributed to our selves.

But you see, God hath aimed at the Magnifying of his own Glory: and therefore hee hath chosen *Faith*, to bee the *Grace* whereby wee should bee Justified. And if ever you would bee justified, if ever you would have *Glory*, give him *Glory*.

4. The fourth thing at first propounded to bee cleared, was, *How Faith justifieth.*

For the clearer answer whereto, wee will lay down these two Distinctions.

1 Faith may be considered,

1. Either formally, as an inherent *Grace* of God in us.

2 Or instrumentally, as that whereby wee receive *Christ*. In the first sense it hath nothing to do with Justification.

The Papist, because wee deny Faith to justifie in respect of its own worthiness, say, that we make it *titulum sine re*, as it were a matter of nothing, whereas in respect of Justification, wee acknowledge it the only instrument, and that is much to bee said of it.

2 Faith is considered,

1. Either

1. Either absolutely as a Habit, or Act of ours.
2. Or Relatively, as it hath relation to Christ, and makes us one with him.

In the former sense again it hath nothing to do with Justification, but in the second sense as it is related to Christ, and brings us over to Christ, so it is said to justify us, because it brings us to him, by whom wee are justified, *Act. 13. 39.* By him (speaking of Christ) all that beleeve are justified, by him, but not by Faith absolutely, but only as relating to him.

Indeed wee are said to live by Faith, as well as by Christ, *Gal. 2. 20.* to have remission of sins by Faith, *Act. 10. 43.* as well as by Christ, *Ephes. 1. 7.* to be justified by Faith, *Rom. 3. 28.* as well as by Christ, *Isa. 53. 11.* to have peace with God by Faith, *Rom. 5. 1.* as well as by Christ, *Col. 1. 20.* to be sanctified by Faith, *Act. 15. 9.* as well as by Christ, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* to overcome the World by Faith, *1 John 5. 4, 5.* as well as by Christ, *John 16. 33.*

To be the Sons of God by Faith, *Gal. 3. 26.* as well as by Christ, *Ephes. 1. 5.* to have eternal life, and to be saved by Faith, *John 5. 24.* *Ephes. 1. 8.* as well as by Christ, *Math. 1. 21.* *John 3. 17.* *1 John 5. 11.*

But now you must consider that none of these are spoken of Faith absolutely considered, as either an Habit or Act of ours, but only relatively, as Faith brings us to Christ, and makes us one with him, by whom alone wee are justified, adopted, sanctified, &c. for between Christ and Faith there is such a Relation, that as Justifying Faith is called the Faith of Christ, or Faith in Christ, or Faith in his blood, so again the Righteousness of Christ, by which wee are justified, is called the Righteousness of Faith.

And so wee conclude this point, that Faith doth not justify as absolutely considered in it self, but relatively, as it hath relation to Christ the object, and as it brings the soul over to him, makes us one with him, by whom wee are justified, have remission of sins, salvation, &c.

5 What are the Royalties and Priviledges of Faith ?

First Royalty.

1. Faith is an heart-clearing Grace.

1. Royalty of Faith. Its an heart-clearing Grace.

When wee are under the guilt of sin, Faith doth justify us. And it is one of the Royalties of Faith, one of the Peculiarities of Faith, that Faith alone doth justify: As the Apostle, *Rom. 3. 28.* Therefore wee conclude, that a man is justified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law. And this Faith clears the heart of the guilt of sin.

1. By procuring a sufficient Pay-master, Christ, who hath satisfied Gods Justice to the full, answered all Bills, Bonds, paid out

our debt to the utmost farthing. Hence, *John 16. 10.* -- I will send the Spirit, and hee shall convince the World of Righteousness; because I go to my Father, and you shall see mee no more; -- That is; hee shall convince the World, That Perfect Righteousness is wrought for them. That Gods Justice is compleatly satisfied. But how shall wee know that? Because -- I go to my Father, and you shall see mee no more. -- That is, you shall see mee no more in this kind, you shall see mee no more to come to suffer, or satisfy for sin; for I have done that already, I have compleatly satisfied Gods Justice for sin. And therefore you shall see mee no more in this kind.

Indeed, If Justice had not been compleatly satisfied: If there had been but one sin upon the file unsatisfied for, wee should have seen him again. Heaven could not have held him. But now seeing hee is gone, and wee see him no more *an humbled, a suffering-Saviour*; this shews all is done.

To this I might adde, *Col. 2. 14.* -- Hee hath blotted out the hand writing of Ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and hath taken it out of the way, and nailed it to his Cross. -- where, by hand-writing of Ordinances, is not meant the Ceremonial-Law only; but whatever did binde us over to the Curse; whatever did binde us over to death. -- All which Christ hath removed by his death.

And the Apostles Gradation is observable here. In the 13th verse hee had set down, that our sins were forgiven. -- Yea, but that is not enough, may some say. Though the debt bee discharged, yet the writing is to shew. -- No, saith the Apostle, *The Hand-writing of Ordinances is blotted out.* -- But, may some say again; it is not so blotted out, so defaced; but it may bee read, and put in suit again; a new quarrel may arise. No, saith the Apostle, -- It is taken away. Oh! But (you will say) it is not so taken away; but as it is laid aside for a time: it may be produced hereafter. No, saith the Apostle, there is no fear of that -- it is nailed to the Cross; it is torn in peeces, it shall never be seen again; never shall a new quarrel arise for the same. Christ hath not only paid the debt; but cancelled, and torn in peeces whatever might witness or testify against us.

If a Debtor did know his Debt were answered; yet if hee have his Bonds and Bills uncalled in; hee is still in fear: But, when hee hath all things which acknowledged his debt, crossed, torn in peeces, made utterly void; then hee is safe, hee knows there is a discharge.

Why Christ did not only discharge our debt, but defaced and abolished all such things, as made acknowledgement of our debt; hee left nothing, that might witness against us untaken away.

And this is the first way whereby Faith doth clear us, viz. by producing, and bringing forth Christ, who hath cleared all, who is called a Surety, *Heb. 7. 22.* Not only in passing his word for us, but paying the Debt for us, answering all, and cancelling all, that

was against us. But Faith doth not clear us only by producing of a sufficient Pay-master, but

2. *By making us one with Christ*, by which this payment is ours, is all for us. So that wee may say with *Ambrose* -- *Pro me natus, pro me vixit, pro me mortuus*. Faith will say, hee was *born for mee*; hee *lived for mee*; hee *died for mee*: for mee hee fulfilled all *Righteousness*, satisfying both Gods *Commanding*, and his *Condemning Justice*; doing my services, bearing my scourges. Hence hee is called, *Jehovah Tsidkenu*. The Lord our Righteousness: by Faith having communion with this Righteousness, as if it were *our own*; a Righteousness wrought by us. Hence *Jeb 33. 26* -- *God shall render to man his Righteousness*; that is the Righteousness of Christ, which is called *ours* by Faith, and is as much *ours* to justify and save us, as *His*, to glorify him. Hence the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 1.* -- *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*; that is, to such as are *Believers*: for they are all one. And why *no condemnation*? They are sinners as well as others. It's true, they are. And therefore the Apostle doth not say -- *There is nothing worthy of condemnation in them*: But -- *There is no condemnation*: Because *Christ* hath taken away the *guilt*, and *condemning power of sin*; hee hath answered all our debts, cancelled all Books, satisfied for all our sins, which did binde us over to *condemnation*, and *wrath of God*. So that wee may say, -- *There is no condemnation to such*.

As for the Law, it cannot condemn us; because wee appeal from the law to the Gospel, from the Court of Justice, to the Court of Mercy: So that the Law hath nothing to do with us.

And, as for the Gospel, that cannot condemn us; because wee are *Believers*. The Gospel doth not require what sinners wee have been; what sins wee are guilty of: but whether the appellant do believe; whether wee be *Believers* or no; which being once cleared, wee are justified.

You see this in the poor Publican. Hee was dragged forth into the Court of Justice; and was there cast: Yet the sentence took no hold of him, because of his appeal to the Throne of Grace, the Court of Mercy, where by Faith pleading nothing but Gods Mercy, and his own misery -- *God be merciful to me a sinner*: hee went away justified, saith the Text, *Luk. 18. 14.*

And this is the first *Royalty of Faith*.

It is an *Heart-cleansing Grace*; which it doth, by producing one, who hath cleared all, and by making us one with him, in all hee hath done, giving us an interest in all.

Second *Royalty*.

Second Royalty
of Faith. It
is an Heart-
cleansing
Grace.

2. Faith is an *Heart-cleansing Grace*; An *Heart-purifying*, and *purging Grace*. Hence *Act. 15. 9.* it is said -- *Their hearts were purified by Faith*. Faith opens a way for a stream of blood to run through the soul, whereby the soul is washed, not from the guilt

of sin only, but from the filth of sin also. The Blood of Christ doth cleanse us from all sin; not only from the guilt, but from the filth of sin. Hence the Apostle, *If the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the ashes of an Heifer sprinkled upon the uncleanness purifie the Flesh: How much more shall the Blood of Christ (who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot) purge and cleanse our Consciences from all dead works, to serve the living God?* Heb. 9. 13, 14.

And Faith doth cleanse the Heart.

1. Argumentatively.

2. Operatively.

1. Argumentatively, By way of Argument, where in Faith takes up Arguments,

1. From God.

2. From our selves,

From God, and that

1. From his Nature. Hee is an holy God; and therefore hee will have an holy People. A pure God; and therefore hee will have a pure People. Hence *Lev. 11. 44. Ye shall be Holy, for I am Holy. I the Lord your God am Holy.* The like, *Lev. 19. 2. And Peter* urges the same, *1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. As he which hath called you is Holy: so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation, For so is written; Bee ye Holy, for I am Holy.*

2. From his Mercies,

1. In Redeeming us.

2. In calling us.

3. In Justifying us.

4. In promising to glorifie us.

1. In Redeeming us. Hath Christ dyed for mee, and shall not I live to him? Hath hee shed his Blood for mee, that I should bee Holy and clean? And shall I delight in uncleanness, and filthiness? was hee slain for mee? and shall I delight in sin? Hath hee suffered so much to purifie mee? and shall I bee unclean still? hath hee done so much to wash mee? and shall I bee filthy still?

2. In calling us, *1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. As hee which hath called you is Holy: so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation.* it is an holy Calling, *2 Tim. 1. 9.* that calleth us to Holiness, and Faith, a purged ear, that hearkeneth to that call.

3. In Justifying us. Hath hee freed mee from the damning Nature of sin? and shall I delight in the defiling nature of sin? hath hee freed mee from the guilt of sin? and shall I love the filth of sin? Hath hee done so much to wash mee? and shall I bee filthy still? Hath hee suffered so much to purifie mee? and shall I delight in uncleanness still? Hath hee made mee a Member of Christ? and shall I bee a filthy Member of so holy a Body? Hath hee made mee a Branch? and shall I be a polluted Branch of so holy a Stock? Hath hee lifted up the light of his Countenance on mee? and shall I ever countenance sin? hath hee smiled on mee? and shall I ever smile upon sin?

K 2

4. In

Pro me filius
Dei jugulatus.

4. In Promises to glorifie us, 2 Cor. 7. 1. Having therefore such precious promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. As if hee had said -- Seeing God hath been so mercifull, and gracious to us, to make us precious Promises, let this put us on self-purging, and self-purifying. Thou looke'st for a holy Heaven, and wilt thou not bee holy? Thou hopest for Salvation, and wilt thou not purifie thy self? -- Hee that hath this Hope, purifies himself, as God is Pure, 1 Joh. 3. 3.

Thus doth Faith take up Arguments from God, his Nature, his Mercies.

2. It takes Arguments from our selves.

1. From the necessity of being cleansed.

2. From the conveniency thereof.

1. From the Necessity: Because otherwise, wee can have no assurance of Justification. They who are freed from the guilt of sin, are freed from the filth of sin. They who partake of the Blood of Christ for pardon, partake of the water of Christ, to purge. Christ came by Water and Blood. They who will have him a Redeemer, must have him also a Refiner, to take away their Swinish nature, to wash them inwardly, not outwardly: for so may a Swine bee.

2. Because otherwise wee can never have assurance of Salvation. -- They who look for new Heavens, must have new hearts. They who look for Glory, must have Grace: First Grace, then Glory. -- For without Holiness no man can see the Lord. -- No unclean thing shall enter into the Kingdome of Heaven -- hee that hath this hope, will fit himself for the Place, hee will labour to bee a pure person, as hee desires to enjoy a pure place. -- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. A pure God, a pure Heaven, a pure Place, requires a pure Person.

2. The Conveniency: This is fully made out in the necessity of it, and that with an advantage, there is such a conveniency, as that it riseth up to a necessity in all the former particulars, so that to an holy heart there is a moral impossibility of the contrary. How can I do this great wickednesse, and sin against God; said Joseph: Gen. 39. 9.

This is the first way of Faiths purifying the Heart, -- Argumentative -- or by way of Argument.

2. Operative. As Faith doth operate and work for the cleansing of our nature, making use of Christ, who is called

A Fountain, Zach. 13. 1.

A Refiner, Mal. 3. 3.

A Purger, Joh. 15. 2.

Hee is said to come with Refiners fire, with Fullers Sope, to purge and purifie us. And thus Faith makes use of Christ, by the least touch of whom, the sinfull flux of sin is dried up and staid. And Faith makes use.

1. Of the Merit of Christ, the Blood of Christ, which is apt to purge us, and cleanse us from sin. And for this end was his Blood shed, even to cleanse us from sin, Tit. 2. 14. -- Hee gave himself, (not only to be a Redeemer, to redeem us from Hell, and the guilt of sin: but) to purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Ephes. 5. 26, 27. -- Hee gave himself for us, that hee might sanctifie us, and cleanse us by the washing of Water, through the Word.

So Faith makes use of this Fountain, to wash and cleanse the soul; it opens this Fountain to the washing of the soul.

2. It makes use of the Prayer of Christ, John 17. 17. -- Sanctifie them through the Truth, thy Word is Truth.

3. Faith makes use of the Promise of Christ, wherein his Fidelity and Truth is engaged for our Purification, Jer. 33. 8. I will cleanse them from all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against mee, Ezek. 33. 25. -- I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your Fools will I cleanse you, Isa. 4. 4. -- The Lord shall wash away the filth of the Daughters of Zion, and purge away the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof. Hence they are called *Purging Promises*.

Thus Faith makes use of Christ, of the Merit of Christ, of the Blood of Christ, of the Prayer and Promise of Christ, whereby it sets on the work of Self-cleansing, whereby it purifies the soul: By vertue of which it washes the soul from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, 2 Cor. 7. 1.

Thus Faith makes use of Christ, of the Merit of Christ, of the Blood of Christ, of the Prayer and Promise of Christ, whereby it sets on the work of Self-cleansing, whereby it purifies the soul: By vertue of which it washes the soul from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, 2 Cor. 7. 1.

Christ's Vice-Roy here in the Soul, which Governs, Rules, and bears sway in the soul, by vertue of the power and Scepter of Christ. Christ hath made Faith his Deputy here in the Soul, and not any other Grace but Faith. Hee knows Faith will rule by Christ, by his power, not its own: So Rule, as not to wrest the Scepter out of Christs hand: It will rule for Christ, and to Christ: for his Glory, and to his Glory, not its own: and therefore hee hath given Faith jurisdiction in the Soul. So that it is a *Soul-commanding Grace*: It is the *Taskmaster* of the Soul, puts every Grace upon its work, and burden: It will not suffer any Grace to be idle, but puts every Grace to its work.

Nay, it inableth the Soul to Doe, what it Commands the Soul to Doe.

To every Precept wee have still a Promise. Nay, every Precept is a Promise.

Where God Commands us to Repent and Believe: to make our selves new hearts, to wash and cleanse our selves, to circumsise our hearts, Hee hath promised in his new Cove nant to doe what hee

Third Royalty
Faith. Its an
Heart-com-
manding-
Grace.

hee hath commanded, to give us *Faith*, to work Repentance in us, to make us new hearts; to circumsise the heart, to wash and cleanse us from our filthiness.

And *Faith* urging the Precepts of God, makes use of the Promises of God: sues out the Promise, and fetches strength from "the Promise, to perform the Precept. -- Lord, thou hast commanded mee to make mee a new heart; and thou hast promised to take this stony heart from mee, and to give mee an heart of Flesh. Lord, performe thy Promise to thy Servant, in which thou madeest mee put my trust. Thou commandest mee to be Holy, and thou hast promised to make mee holy. Thou art the Lord, that Sanctifies. Lord, make mee Holy. -- *Da quod jubes, & jube quod vis: sic enim implentur voluntas tua, & obedientia nostra*: give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt: and so both our obedience and thy Will shall be fulfilled.

Thus you see, as God, so *Faith* ruling by God, from God, doth not only authoritatively impose commands, and lay duties upon the soul, but mercifully and friendly helps and inables the soul to do what is commanded.

It is not a Rigid Master, -- Reaping where it sows not, commanding fruit from that ground whereon it sows no seed: but sows strength to reap Obedience; inables to do what is commanded to do.

It is said -- by *Faith* Abraham obeyed. *Faith* did inable him to obey, and made his obedience fruitfull and acceptable. *Faith* inabled him to obey, even in that great act of Obedience, when his Son, his only Son, the Son of his Love, the Son of the Promise, the Son of his Old Age, &c. was to be taken away by death, killed, murdered, and that by his own hands, &c. And yet *Faith* inabled him hereunto.

Fourth Royalty,

Faith is an Heart-quieting Grace, an Heart-calming and stiling Grace.

Fourth Royalty
of Faith. Its
an Heart-quiet-
ing Grace.

It is a Grace that layes all the tumults in the Soul: all the insurrections in the Soul. When Passions are up, and unruly Affections do stir, *Faith* doth allay and hush them. When Passions of Fear are up, *Faith* laies them, will not suffer unruly fears to come into the Throne, to command the Soul.

When Passions of Anger are up, *Faith* doth quench their heat: when Grief stirs, *Faith* doth bridle and moderate this: when Discontent is up, and the Soul is ready to murmur and quarrel against God, and his dealings, *Faith* doth lay all these risings. *Faith* hath a special art to still the Soul; to strike it dumb in these cases. Hence you see David. -- *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because*

because it was thy doing. -- Faith struck him dumb.

Wee read indeed *Zacharie* was dumb; but Infidelity struck him dumb. -- *David* saith here -- hee was dumb, but Faith struck him dumb. The former was a Penal-dumbness: God silenced his Tongue, because hee suspended his Faith: But this latter was a dutiful-Dumbness; such a Dumbness as Faith hath caused in the Soul; which shut up his lips, from murmuring, not from praying, *Psal.* 39. 9. hee praies there, -- *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, and yet -- Take thy Plague from mee, I am consumed by the stroke of thy hand, &c.*

The like power of Faith you see in the case of *Aaron*, when it silenced his Soul, in such a sad condition, *Levit.* 10. 3, 4. -- And *Moses* said unto him, *This is that, the Lord said, &c.* And *Aaron* held his peace. Why, what was his tryal? why it was the loss of his Sons, the loss of his Eldest Sons, when they were young, and without posterity, in the first day of their Ministration, in the sight of all the Congregation, and by so fearful a Judgement, as fire from the Lord; and in the act of their sin, offering strange fire: Nay, and which (some think) was joyned with Drunkenness too: whereupon immediately follows the prohibition of Wine. So that the Congregation might suspect, they went but from fire to fire, from a destruction by fire, to a preservation in fire, from a temporal, to an eternal burning.

Yet now in all this mark the Power of Faith. *Moses* having declared the Author God, the cause, their sin: It's said, *Aaron was dumb, and held his peace: Audire voluntate Dei siles*: having heard the Will of God, hee was mute and silent; his Tongue was chained up, hereby confessing, saith *Calwin*, *Iusto Dei Iudicio extinctus esse*: That they were slain by the Just Judgement of God.

The like you see in *Eli*, when *Samuel* had declared what God had said to him concerning the destruction of his house: why, saith he, -- *It is the Lord, let him do what pleaseth him*, 1 Sam. 3. 18.

And remarkable was that in *Job*. -- You may read in the first Chapter, how one wave came upon the neck of another.

1. The *Sabeans* fell upon his Oxen, and his Asses, and slew his Servants.

2. Another comes and tells him, -- *Fire from Heaven had burnt up his Sheep.*

3. A third tells him, -- *The Chaldeans had taken away his Camels.*

4. A fourth hee comes and tells him, -- *His Sons and his Daughters were eating and drinking, and a wind blew down the house on their heads, and buried them all in one grave.* His whole stock was lost in one day. Nay, Hee lost not his stock of Cattell only, but of his Children also.

My Brethren these were great trials, enough to put a man out of patience; enough to make the most composed man besides himself:

self: To lose his goods, his Cattel, his Substance, and all in a day: Nay, to lose his Sons and his Daughters, which were his whole Posterity, the stay and hope of his Family: yea and all at once, at one clap: and that so suddenly; yea, and in the midst of their merriments.

These were great Tryals: where Yesterday it might have been said, who so rich as *Job*: now to day, who so poor as *Job*:

Yet mark here now the Power of Faith; how it silenced the Soul. In stead of murmuring, hee fell down, and worshiped and "said, *The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.* Thus you see the Power of Faith.

And, my Brethren, you had need of Faith. As the Apostle said of Patience: So I of Faith: -- *You have need of Faith.* As you walk in the way of this life, you shall meet with such things as will move you, as will put you besides your selves: If Faith do not settle and compose you; you cannot bee *undiq; sursum* (like a Dye) light upon your square: if Faith bee not your bottom.

You may have crosses and losses before you die. You may lose your Husbands, your Wives, your Children, your Goods. *Job* lot may befall you.

And every one of these may cause a man to rise up against himself, may cause an uproar in the Soul. Wee are not Stoicks, wee are not without Passions, nor sinfull-Passions, mutinous-Affections: And therefore wee had need of something in the Soul to sway and keep down these unruly distempers. And this is only Faith which can still, and calm the soul in all storms, and tempests.

A man without Faith in such a case as this, is like a naked man in a storm; like an unarmed man in a battel, like a Ship unballanced, and unanchored in a Tempest. A man without Faith is under no command. Passions of Anger, Fear, Grief, and all command him. And Passion without Faith is violent, breaks down all banks, drowns, overwhelms, and destroies the Soul. And therefore you had need of something to ballance the Soul, to charge the Soul, to calm and still the Soul, in such a condition.

Now you see *Faith is an Heart-calming, an Heart-quieting, and stilling-Grace*; which it doth after this manner.

1. Imperiously.
2. Perswasively.
1. Sometimes Imperiously; and that either
 1. Commanding, or
 2. Checking the Soul.

1 Imperiously commanding the Soul. Laying charge on the Soul to bee quiet, to bee still. -- *My Soul, bee silent to Jehovah,* said *David.*

As *Christ* did the Waters and the Wind. -- *Peace, and bee still, and there was a great calm:* So here, when the Waves are up, and threaten

threaten to overflow the banks, to overwhelm the soul; *Faith* laies her command upon the soul. -- Peace, and bee still. No more words. Leave your murmurings. Leave your impatency. Thus sometimes *Faith* calms the soul.

1. Imperiously checking the soul. -- You do not well to bee angry. You do not well to grieve. You do not well to bee discontented, to bee impatient. You offend God, cause him to scourge you more, to lay more load upon you; seeing you bear this so impatiently.

As the Town-Clerk of *Ephesus* stilled that uproar with these words, *Act. 19. 40.* -- *Wee shall verily bee called in question for this dayes uproar, seeing there is no cause can bee given of this concourse:* So *Faith* doth sometimes lay the tumults in the soul. -- *You shall verily bee called in question one day, for this Passion, this Discontent, this Murmuring, this Uproar: seeing no cause can bee given, that you should quarrel with God, as you do.*

2. *Faith* doth sometimes calm the Soul, in a Mild, and persuasive-way; wherein it reasons with the Soul -- *Why art thou so much cast down, oh, my Soul! Why art thou so troubled! so disquieted within mee!* In which reasoning, *Faith* will take an Argument of Patience.

1. From the Author of Afflictions. That is God. Afflictions, troubles arise not out of the dust, but from God, which was the ground of *Dauids* patience. -- *I was dumb, &c.* Because it was thy doing. So of *Jobs*, -- *The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away.* So in case of *Shimei* his cursing *David*. *David* did not bite at the stone, and never minde the thrower: but hee looks up; discovers the hand, as well as the stone. -- *Let him alone. It may bee God hath bid him go forth, and curse David.*

2. Sometimes from the ground of Gods dealings; and that is sin. *Faith* produceth sin to bee the cause. For this cause; and this stops the mouth. *Psal. 51. That thou mayest bee just when thou judgest.* This laies a Soul in the dust; makes a man accept of the punishment of his iniquity. As you have the phrase, *Levit. 26. 41.* That is, lye down, justifie God, clear God in all his dealings: bee so far from murmuring, that the Soul will take Gods part in all, clearing God, and condemning it self.

"Thus you see the Church -- *Wherefore doth a living man complain? A man for the punishment of his sin? -- it is his mercy that wee are not consumed.*

Thus *Faith* brings to remembrance our sins. Such a time: such a place, &c.

It laies the finger on the fore place, discovers the cause, which causes a man to make himself the subject of Gods anger: and turns a mans anger against himself.

This was some ground of *Dauids* patience; when *Shimei* cursed. -- *Go up thou Bloody man.* -- It made him smel his own

own sin, his Bloody, and so became patient.

3. Sometimes from the end of Gods dealings.

1. In general. And that is for good; though it bee not *bonum*, yet it is in *bonum*: Though it bee not good, yet it is for good. It is a Chastifying-mercy: not in vindictive-Justice.

There is a *Misericordia-puniens*: and there is a *Iustitia-parcens*: A punishing-Mercy, and a sparing-Justice.

As God doth exercise his Sparing-Justice towards the wicked, when hee suffers them to go on in sin, and doth not punish them, as wee read, *Hos. 4. 14.* -- *I will not punish your Daughters when they commit Whoredome; nor your Spouses, when they commit Adultery.* the like, *Ezek. 16. 42.* -- *I will cause my fury towards thee to rest, and I will bee quiet, and will bee no more angry.* Upon which one saith, -- *Solo auditu tremisco*, I tremble at the very hearing. For, if God will correct no more, then hee will destroy next. This is a Sparing-Justice. And, as God doth exercise this towards the wicked: so hee exerciseth a punishing-mercy toward the good. Hence the Apostle, *1 Cor. 11. 32.* -- *Wee are chastised of the Lord, that wee might not bee condemned with the World.* -- That wee may not bee condemned with the World, Hee suffers the World to condemn us. That wee may not love the World, hee suffers the World to hate us. That wee may bee crucified to the World, hee suffers the World to crucifie us. Therefore wee meet with crosses, with abuses in the World, because hee will not have us perish with the World.

God takes liberty to chastise our carkasses, to heal our consciences: to afflict our bodies, to save our souls. And wee have oftentimes occasion to blefs God more for crosses, than for comforts.

As there is a curse hid in the best things to the wicked: so there is a blessing hid in the worst things to the Godly. There is a blessing in sickness, a blessing in crosses, in losses, &c.

Hence, -- *All his wayes are wayes of mercy.* His correcting, and comforting wayes: His scourging and solacing wayes. The wayes of health, and the wayes of sickness, wayes of prosperity, and wayes of adversity. All are in Mercy -- *All things shall work together for good unto them that love God.*

Thus in the general, Faith doth clear to the soul, whereby it doth possess the Soul with patience under any evil, and laies the tumults and quarrels of the Soul.

2. In particular, Faith discovers at what end God aims.

1. It may bee the trial and exercise of our Graces; as in *Job.*

2. It may bee for the Destruction of sin, and ruine thereof. Either Pride, Worldly-mindedness, Adherency to the Creature, with many more. To humble us, to wean us, to win us, to make us more thankful, with many such ends. All which discovered and

and cleared by *Faith* to the Soul, do exceedingly calm and still the heart in every condition.

Fifth Royalty.

5. *Faith is a Soul-Securing-Grace.*

It is such a Grace that doth shelter and secure the Soul from all evil. Hence, *Prov. 29. 25.* -- *They who trust in the Lord shall be safe, or, shall be lifted up on high,* (as the word signifies) above men, above the World, above all storms, above all troubles; shall be set out of danger, out of Gunshot.

1. Faith is a Soul-securing Grace.

As *Noah's Ark* was carried above all waters; So *Faith* shall carry the Soul above all dangers. *Hee that trusts shall be safe.* So that you see *Faith* is an *Heart-securing-Grace.* Wee may sit down securely under the shadow of *Faith.*

It is a *Soul-Securing-Grace.* Nothing else will secure you but beleiving. Build as many Towers of succour as you can; Raise up as many Castles of strength, as your provisions will reach; yet all these are but Castles in the Air; there's no foundation for them, nor shelter in them. Beat; and cast out as many Anchors as you can; yet you will but Anchor on the waves; you shall never finde a bottom to rest on, to secure your souls from trouble.

All the provisions in the Creature; All that thy power, thy Policy can do, and finde out, will not compass thee with safety, if thou do not trust. There is nothing doth secure the Soul, and set the Soul out of danger; but a Resolved-Trust. And no Trust, but a Trust in God.

1. Not a Trust in Riches. -- *The Rich mans wealth is his Strong City:* but it's so in his conceit only; it is weak.

2. Not a Trust in Friends. -- Deceitful Friends *Job* calls them. -- Waters that fail -- as *Jeremy* calls them. But -- *broken Walls, and tottering Fences,* as the Psalmist stiles them, *Psal. 62. 3.*

3. Not a Trust in Princes. If any could secure the Soul, one would think they might; but these cannot, *Psal. 62.* throughout, *Psal. 146. 3, 4. Prov. 10. 15. Nahum. 3. 12, 13.* Wee read the Children of *Israel* would trust in the shadow of *Egypt.* *Egypt* was a Wel-spread-Tree, it promised security under her boughs, and branches; but it could not; there was no security, *Jer. 2. 37.* God threatens hee would reject their confidences, and they should not prosper thereby.

So that no Trust, but a Trust in God will compass the Soul with safety, and this will, it is an *Heart-Securing-Grace.*

1. It sets a man upon a *Soul-Securing-Bottom;* which is God himself, *Christ* himself. This is that Bottom *David* cryed to be set upon. -- *Set mee upon the Rock, that is higher than I.* Why one would have thought, *David* had been secure enough upon his own Bot-

tom; Hee had a good bottom to stand on, if there bee one in the World. Hee was a King, and had provisions for safety. If any man might be secure, then he. But hee sees hee could not be secure in himself.

-- *His feet began to sink:* And therefore crys out for a better bottom. Oh! *Set me upon the Rock,* that is higher than I.

Time was, a *Man* was his own *bottom*: A bottom to himself, But it was but a *Sandy-bottom*. Even in his *Innocency* there was no *Security* in it. But now God hath appointed our *Bottom* to bee *out of our selves*, and to bee in him. And therefore our conditions are secure: the *Soul* that stands on this bottom, is safe, is secure.

This *Christ* sets down in the *Parable of the House built upon a Rock*, that is, upon himself. Though *The winds blow, the waves and billows beat*: yet there is no danger of our fall.--Wee stand upon a *Rock*.

Why, but may not a *Weak and Tottering house* bee built upon a *strong foundation*? And what is it then the surer for the *Foundation*? It may bee blown down, though the foundation bee never so strong. Yea, But now *Christ* is such a *Rock*, as doth derive vertue and strength unto the structure and building.

Indeed a man may build a weak house upon a strong foundation, and the house fall for all that: because the rock is a dead thing, and cannot impart any of its strength unto the structure.

But it is not so here. Bee the building never so weak: yet this *Rock* can hold it up: because it diffuseth its strength into the building. Hence 1 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5. *Christ* is called a living, not a dead, *Rock*--*A living stone*.--To whom comming as to a living *Stone*, wee also as lively-stones are built up a spiritual house. Which shews the transformation of the building into the nature and firmnesse of the *Rock*.

Thus you see, *Faith* is a *soul-securing-grace*.

It sets a man upon a *soul-securing-bottom*. It makes God our security, who is called,

The strong-God.

A Tower.

The mighty-God.

A Fort.

The Rock of Refuge.

An High-place, Mich. 4. 8.

A defense.

The Tower of his Flock.

A shield.

The strong hold of the daughter

of Sion. A Covert from the storm, Isay 32. 1, 2.

Faith makes All-God our security. It engages all-God to be our security.

His Power. And is not this able to secure us?

His Wisdom. And will not this secure us?

His Truth. And will not this secure us?

His Mercy. And cannot all this secure us?

Hee, who trusts in the Lord, *Mercy* shall compass him on every

ry side: Hee is hemm'd in with Mercy. Or mercy imbraceth him on every side, to secure him.

As trust doth compasse mercy: so mercy doth compasse trust. As trust imbraceth mercy: so mercy imbraceth trust.

It is not *Faith* it self, that doth secure us: But *Faith* doth make God our security. It sets a man upon a soul-securing-bottom: on a soul-securing-God: on a soul-securing-Power, on a soul-securing-Mercy. Therefore needs must a Beleeving, a Trustring-soul be secure.

2. It instates the soul, in soul-securing-promises. The promises of preservation from trouble. Promises of Deliverance out of trouble.

All the promises, which God hath made of Security: *Faith* instates the soul into them all.

Hee hath promised -- *when wee passe through the waters he will be with us, and the waters shall not overflow us, When we pass through the fire, the flame shall not kindle upon us, Isa. 43. 2.*

Hee hath promised -- *Hee will stand at our right hand, and wee shall not bee moved, - Psal. 16. - He will never leave us, neither forsake us, - Heb. 13. 6. - The Gates of Hell shall never prevail against us, Mat. 16. 18.*

Hee hath promised to bee a Tower, a Rock, a Refuge, a Covert from a storm, an hiding place in time of Danger, &c. And it is faith, that doth instate us, into these Soul-securing-Promises.

As there is no promise to us, till wee beleeve: so, if once wee beleeve, all the Promises are ours.

Look into the word of God: and what promises soever there are made for securing the soul, All these are thine.

3. *Faith* doth instate us into soul-securing-Priviledges.

1 It makes us the Sons and Daughters of God, *John. 1. 12, 13* -- *As many as received him, to them hee gave power, or priviledge, to become the Sons of God: Even so as many as beleeved in his name, - Gal. 3. 26. You are the children of God by faith in Christ: And will not a father secure his child?*

2. *Faith* makes us the Spouse of Christ, the members of Christ. It ingrafts us, and unites us into him. And will he not secure his members.

3. It make us the inheritance of Christ. Hee hath promised to bee a Tower to his Flock. *A strong-hold to the Daughters of Zion,* These are all soul-securing-priviledges: And therefore beleeving souls shall be secure.

Oh! Then, Would you bee secured from the evil-day? would you bee secured in the evil day? Labour for *Faith*: This alone secures the soul. It sets a man upon a soul-securing-bottom: Instates a man in soul-securing-promises, Gives him right to soul-securing-priviledges.

Abrogate fears, Surrogate *Faith*, Down with fears, which betray the succour of the soul, and set up beleieving.

Sixth Royalty.

6 *Faith is an heart-humbling Grace.*

6 Royalty of
Faith. Is a
soul-humbling
Grace.

Whether it be a Legal, or whether it be an Evangelical-*Faith*, it works humiliation. The one a Legal humiliation, and casting down: The other an Evangelical-humiliation; we shall in this cheisty deal with the first.

It is said of *Abah*, that he humbled himself, put on sackcloth, and went softly. And this was the fruit and effect of his Legal-*Faith*, whereby hee beleaved the truth, and certainty of Gods Judgements denounced against him, and his house. The men of *Nineveh*, when *Fonah* preached that sad Sermon. *Fonah* 3.4. -- Yet forty days, and *Nineveh* shall be destroyed -- It is said -- They beleaved God; That is, The truth of that message, which *Fonah* brought from God. And it follows, as an effect of this *Faith* -- They humbled themselves, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, and sate in ashes, from the King upon the Throne, to the meanest of them.

And my Brethren, *Faith* hath a great influence into the work of self-humbling.

1 It takes up self-humbling Considerations.

From God, the justice of God, the threatnings, the curses God hath denounced against sin.

2. *Faith* doth Realize all this to the Soul, which God hath said against sin. *Faith* doth not make these things more reall, then they are: but doth Realize things to the Soul, not imaginary, but real things, which, being lookt upon as reall things, do humble.

This is the Reason, why one, when he hears of Gods threatnings denounced against Sin, goes home, and lyes in the dust, is humbled, and cast down; as *Josiah*, when hee read the book of the Law. And another stands up, out-faceth Hell, and the curse; He is never humbled; nor cast down. It is because the one he looks upon these things as reall, and true: the other hee looks upon them, as fancies, Imaginary things.

If men beleaved, that all that evil, which God hath threatened against Sin, were true, they could not drink down sinne as water, nor eat the bread of Sin, with such delight, as they do.

If the swearer did beleieve, there were a flying Rol gone out against him, as *Zachary* saith. If the Drunkard did see, death in the Pot, &c. If I say, wicked men beleaved the Reality and Truth of these things, they could not go on so quietly in their wick-

wicked courses: but would be humbled:

Hence the Apostle sets this down for the ground, why the Preaching of the word was not profitable to them. -- *Because it was not mixed with Faith in them that heard it.* They did not beleeve what they heard: and so neither the word of Terror, nor the word of Comfort did profit them.

As the promises of God are not quickning, raising, comforting, except there bee *Faith*: so the Threats are not Killing, humbling, working, if *Faith* be not there.

Wee may preach, till our spirits fail, and spend our labour in vain, our strength and pains for nought, if the things which God speaks, and we preach, be not beleeved.

If you by unbelief, do slight all the threats of God denounced against sin, if you make child's play of them, as the word signifies, *1 Pet. 3. 3.*

If you look upon these but as Bug-bears, things to keep men in awe, and not real things: No marvel if you be not Humbled.

But, if by *Faith* you would Realize these things to your selves, and behold them not as Fancies, and sad dreams, but such things as are infallibly true, real things, not as painted Hell, painted fire, but as reall: you would then finde them to work; These mingled with *Faith*, would lay a man in the dust. Now this is a property of *Faith*, to Realize the Object, or thing beleeved; and hence comes an influence on the soul, to humble and abase it.

3 Faith doth not only take up humbling Considerations, and Realizeth all these to the Soul. But *Faith* makes all this present. *Faith* doth give a present being to all this. Hence *Heb. 11. 13.* *Faith imbraceth the promise.* The word is *Ἀκρας ἐπιστολῆς*. -- *Faith* kisseth the promise, gives a present being to the promise.

And as it gives a present being to the promise, or word of comfort: so to the threatening and word of terror. *Faith* discovers death and hell, and all at hand for Sin. *Faith* looks upon sinne, in all it's Doomes-day apparel, and array: smells fire and Brimstone in sin.

Whereas unbelievers, they look on these things at the wrong end of the Prospective, and that makes things neer, seem a far off, and that afar off, is not seen at all.

But *Faith* looks upon them through the right end of the prospective, And these things a far off, are seen at hand, present. Hence it is called -- *The Evidence of things not seen.* As it was said of *Abraham* -- *Hee saw the day of Christ, and rejoiced:* and yet *Abraham* was dead many hundred of years before Christ; yet by vertue of his prospective, by vertue of his Faith, hee saw it, as if it had been present, though it were never so far off: So here though the second day of *Christ*, the day of judgement bee a far

far off; yet *Faith* sees it, and is humbled; *Faith* gives it a present Being.

4. *Faith* applies and brings home all this to the Soul. As the word of Comfort, the Promise is applyed, and brought home to the Soul by *Faith*: so the word of Terror, the Threatning is brought home to the Soul by the same *Faith*, by which the Soul is cast down and humbled.

The manner of *Faiths* Application is by a practical Syllogisme, where the Major, or first Proposition is the Word of God: The Assumption, or second Proposition is the Testimony of Conscience: and the conclusion is inferred from them both, as *hee that beleeveeth not, but continueth in sin*, is for the present guilty and obnoxious to wrath, at the last Judgement.

But I beleeve not, but continue in sin.

Therefore I am for the present guilty and obnoxious to wrath, to bee inflicted at the last Judgement.

Seventh Royalty.

7. *Faith is an Heart-softening-Grace.*

7. Royalty of
Faith. Its an
Heart-soften-
ing-Grace.

Such a Grace as doth not only humble us, but soften us: not only break us, but melt us. In the Law it humbles us, it breaks us: but the heart like a flint, every dust still retains its flinty, stony Nature, is a stone. And therefore in the Gospel it melts us, it dissolves us. Thunders of *Sinai* terrifie, but Dews of *Sin* mollifie.

So much *Faith*, so much Sorrow, they are like the Fountain and the Stream, whereof the one ariseth no higher than the other. So much *Faith* and apprehension of Mercy: so much brokenness of spirit for sin.

Where Unbelief doth stony the Heart, harden the Heart, dries up the spring and issues of sorrow. No Heart is so hard as an Unbeleeving-heart: neither the Promises, nor Threatnings, neither Mercy, nor Justice, neither Word, nor works will melt it: *Faith* on the contrary turns the Soul into Water, dissolves a man into tears, opens all the deep springs of sorrow in the Soul.

1. *Faith* looks upon *Heart-melting-Promises*: Takes a survey of the Riches of Gods Love and Mercy, in making such precious Promises, which doth exceedingly melt.

2. *Faith* takes up *Heart-softening-Considerations*, from the Love and Mercy of God towards us, which are *Heart-melting-Mercies*, from the goodness and sweetness of God. *Faith* makes us see God as hee is. It makes God no otherwise than hee is, not more gracious, not more merciful than hee is: But *Faith* discovers him as hee is, a gracious and a mercifull God. It doth but undraw the Curtain, but take off the Mask, which Satan and Infidelity have put

put on; and makes us to behold God as hee is, in all his glorious excellencies, Soul-saving attributes, and Mercies: which who can behold by *Faith*, but must needs mourn and dissolve into tears, that they have offended him? Thus you see, *Ezek. 36. 31.* when God had discovered himself in his Pardoning-Mercy, his washing, Forgiving-Mercy to the beleeving soul; then they shall mourn and bee humbled.

Oh! There is nothing breaks the heart more than Mercy; nothing melts a man more than the smiles of God, the Mercies of God; which being discovered to the Soul, the Soul is not able to stand stubborn under it.

3. *Faith* looks upon a *Soul-melting*, a *Soul-softening* Object; upon *Christ*; a wounded, a broken *Christ*. And who can behold him but with an *Humbled*, and a *broken-heart*? A *bleeding Christ*, without a *bleeding Heart*?

Oh! Here is enough in this Object to open all the springs of sorrow in us; wee need not to go to *Bellarmines* Twelve Considerations to open the Fountain of tears in us, wee need not bring in the miseries of mankind for one; nor the sad condition of the Souls in Purgatory for another. Wee need not bee beholden to him for such considerations as these, to help us to *mourn*. Oh! Here is enough in *Christ*, in a *broken and wounded Christ*, to open all the *springs* in thee; and if thou hadst a *Fountain of tears*, to spend them all. The Considerations of his sufferings,

1. Either in themselves.

2. Or in their cause.

3. Or as the Effects of sin.

1. The Considerations of his breakings and sufferings as they were in themselves.

1. The sufferings of his Body. What woundings? breakings? scourgings? crownings? peircings did hee endure upon his Body?

2. The sufferings on his Soul. What conflict and strugglings with the wrath of God? the powers of darkness? what weights? what burdens? what wrath did hee undergo, when his *Soul was heavy unto death, beset with terrors*? as the word implies. *When he drunk that bitter Cup, that Cup of bitterness? that Cup mingled with Curses, which made him sweat drops of blood?* which if men or Angels had but sip'd of, 'twould have made them reel, stagger, and tumble into Hell.

2. The Consideration of his sufferings, in the Cause, as the meriting cause of all our good, procurer of all our Peace, Life, Salvation. -- Hee was wounded, that wee might bee healed, scourged, that wee might bee solaced, drank the bitter Cup of wrath, that wee might have the draught of Mercy. -- Hee was slain.

But not for himself, saith *Daniel*. But -- wounded for our transgressions

gressions, broken for our iniquities; The Chastisement of our peace was upon him. *Faith* looks upon these his sufferings, as the meriting causes of our good.

3. The Considerations of his sufferings, as effects of sin, as the effects of our sin, as that which our sins have brought upon him: Which Consideration must needs effect and break our hearts.

When the soul shall look upon *Christ*, and say. *It was I, that have been the murderer; I, that have been the Traitor: my sins which brought all this evil on thee. I find, and thou sufferedst. It was I, that did eat the sour Grape; and thy teeth were set on edge. My sins were thy death: yet by thy death, thou broughtst the sinner life. I have wounded thee, yet thou hast healed mee: even out of that wound which my sins have made, hast thou sent out a Plaisier, even thy Blood for my sins.* Oh; This must needs fill the heart with sorrow.

Faith still looks upon an *Humbled Christ*, with an *Humbled Heart*: upon a *Broken Christ*, with a *Broken Heart*: upon a *Bleeding Christ*, with a *Bleeding Heart*: upon a *Wounded Christ*, with a *Wounded Heart*: Hence, *Zach. 12. 10.* -- *They shall look upon him whom they have peirced. And how shall that sight affect them? It follows.* -- *"They shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and lament for him, as one lamenteth for his first born. In that day there shall bee a great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon, in the Vallie of Megiddon.*

God made the same Organ for seeing, and for weeping. And the soul that sees well, weeps well. Never soul that did by the Eye of *Faith* look upon this Son of Righteousness, but their frozen hearts did melt within them.

Would you ever bee mourning men and Women for sin? would you bee in bitterness, as one is in bitterness for his first born? Oh! Steep your thoughts in the blood of the Lamb: Dwell a little on *Christ* crucified: Look wistly upon *Christ* by *Faith*: and this will solvere *Gelucidum*: melt and thaw our frozen hearts; turn us from stones into flesh.

Eight Royalty.

8. *Faith* is an Heart-transforming-Grace.

8 Royalty of
Faith. Its an
Heart-trans-
forming-Grace

Such a Grace as doth transform the Soul into the nature of the Object. *Faith* is as powerful in this spiritual conception, to work in us the image of the Object seen, as *Fantasy* is oftentimes in the natural conception.

The Poets tell us of some that did transform such as beheld them, into stones: such a power there was in the Object, the thing beheld, as to transform say they. But here it is true. If by *Faith* wee cast our Eyes upon *Christ*, of stones, wee shall bee turned

turned into men; of sinners into Saints; of a hard heart, to a soft and fleshly; of Children of Satan, to the Sons and Daughters of God, *Joh. 1. 12.* -- *As many as beleeved on him, to them hee gave power to bee the Sons of God. Sons, not born of the flesh, or the will of the flesh: but of God, who begets like himself.* -- *As that which is born of flesh, is flesh: So that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* -- Hence wee are said to bee -- made partakers of the Divine Nature. -- *To bee transformed into the image and likeness of God. To bee Holy, as Hee is Holy: Pure as Hee is Pure. To bee as hee is in this World.*

Never soul that looked on him by Faith, but came away with another heart. -- *They looked to him, and were enlightened,* saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 34. 5.*

But plainly you shall read the *Transforming Power of Faith*, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* -- *Whiles beholding as in a Glas, the Glory of the Lord; wee are changed into the same image, from Glory to Glory.*

Such a Glas hee is, that never did the Eye of Faith behold him, but the Soul was changed with the sight, from a Wolf into a Lamb; from a sinner, into a Saint; from Darknes to Light. -- *You were once Darknes; now are you Light in the Lord.* It turns a man upside down; wholly transforms him.

Indeed, there is no change of the substance of soul and body; nor of the faculties of soul and body: but the qualities of the faculties are cleer changed.

The Head is transformed; where before was darknes, now there's Light: where before it did judge highly of carnal things, and low esteemed spiritual: it doth now the quite contrary.

The Will is transformed: where before it was full of obstinacy and stoutness, contradiction and rebellion: now there is pliability to good, and conformity between Gods Will and his. They are not two, but one Will. Gods Amen, is his Amen: Gods *Fiat*. his *Fiat*: Gods Will, his will.

So the Heart, that is transformed, whereas before it was nothing but a noisome sink of sin, nothing but a Cage of unclean birds, the womb of sin, a seminary of lust: Now it is washed, purged, purified, sanctified, made a fit Receptacle for *Christ*, an Habitation for God, by his Spirit.

Thus you see *Faith is an Heart-transforming-Grace*. Wee cry and say, Oh! If I had another heart I could beleeve. If my heart were more holy, more sanctified: why the way to get another heart is *to beleeve*: do but *beleeve*, and you shall see *another heart come into you, another Spirit, another Soul*. Do but look upon *Christ*, and you shall bee transformed. It is such a look as sends a man away with another heart.

As the Wise men, It is said, -- After they had seen *Christ*, beheld *Christ*, they went home another way: So, when by *Faith* wee have seen *Christ*, it sends the Soul another way, with another

ther Spirit, with other Principles, with other Resolutions.

There is this Power of *Faith*, to transform the Soul into the nature of the Object beleaved. Belief of the Promises breeds Principles in the Heart suitable to the Promises. Belief in *Christ* breeds a Spirit suitable to *Christ*.

As *Faith*, Belief in God a Father, breeds Principles of Love, Fear, Reverence, and Obedience in the Soul; such things as are agreeable: So the belief in *Christ* a Saviour, breeds Principles of Trust, of Love, of Desire, with the like.

Ninth Royalty.

9 *Faith is an heart-pacifying Grace.*

9 Royalty of
Faith. Its an
Heart-pacify-
ing Grace.

Isa. 26. 3. -- Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on thee: because hee trusteth in thee. A place alledged by One; who (lying on his death-bed, and injoying abundance of peace and calmness of Spirit; being demanded, how it came to pass, hee was not now assaulted with Satan) replied, Hee knew no ground, no cause, save this: God had promised -- *To keep the soul in perfect Peace, whose mind was staid on him, who trusteth in him.* Hee relyed on *Christ*, and therefore injoyed rest.

Isa. 27. 5. -- Let him take hold of my strength. That is, by *Faith*, lay hold on my Covenant, my *Christ*: and I will bee at peace with him.

Hence the Apostle, *Rom. 5. 1. -- Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God.* *Rom. 15. 13. -- Now the God of all hope fill you with joy, and peace in beleewing.*

An unbelieving-heart is a stormy heart, an unpeaceable-heart. All things

Quæ supra nos
Intra nos,
Infra nos,
Contra nos.

Above us.

Within us.

Below us, are all against us, whilst wee are Unbelievers.

1. Above us, wee have an angry and displeased God.

2. Within us, wee have a stormy and troublesome Conscience, threatening nothing but death; like the troubled Sea, casting up mire and dirt; as *Isaiab* speaks, *Isa. 57. 20. -- There is no Peace, saith my God to the wicked.*

3 Below us, we have there all the Creatures our enemies, ready upon Gods commission to execute his displeasure upon us.

But now, being Beleevers, all is at Peace.

1. All above us is at Peace. The Controversy betwixt God and us is ended. *Faith* takes up the quarrel betwixt God and us. -- *Wee have Peace with God, Rom. 5. 1.*

Tranquillus
Deus, Tran-
quillar omnia.

2. All within us is at Peace. A peaceable God makes all at Peace: when once our Peace is made in the Court of Heaven (which is upon the first act of beleewing.) Then follows Peace in the Court of Conscience -- *Peace which passeth all understanding,* Phil.

Phil. 4. 7. Our rest is, to behold God at rest; our Peace is, to see him at Peace.

Eum quietem
aspicere Quis
clere est.

3. All below us are at Peace with us. Wee have Peace with all the Creatures. All are now our Friends, *Joh 5. 23.* The stones of the Field shall bee at league with thee, the Beasts of the Field shall bee at peace with thee, &c. Thou shalt know that Peace shall bee in thy Tabernacle.

Prov. 16. 7. -- When a mans wayes please the Lord, hee will make his enemies to bee at peace with him: When before upon our Rebellion with God, all the Creatures were our enemies; now being reconciled, all are made friends.

1. Faith makes us the Servants to the God of Peace, in whose service there is Peace, *Prov. 3. 17.* -- All his Paths are Peace. Every step of Godliness hath Peace with it: And the reward of whose service shall bee Peace, *Psal. 29. 11.* -- The Lord will bless his people with Peace, *Psal. 85. 8.* -- The Lord will speak Peace to his people, at the last, though they meet with much trouble for the present; war within, and war without, war with lusts, war with Satan: yet the God of Peace shall tread down Satan under our feet at last, and put an end to this war, *Rom. 16. 20.* They shall have a Peace in the Conclusion: And a Peace after war is the surest and most settled Peace, *Psal. 37. 37.* -- Mark the upright man. -- The end of that man is Peace. Though there bee stormes and troubles in the way; yet the end of the journey, that shall bee Peace; A calm after stormes, and never shall there arise storme more, to all Eternity.

2. Faith makes us subjects to the Prince of Peace; unto Christ, who is called -- our Peace, *Ephes. 2. 14.* And our Peace hee is.

1. Not only meritoriously, by shedding his Blood for the purchase of our Peace, *Col. 1. 20.* -- Christ is our Peace, having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross. So *Isa. 53.* -- The chastisement of our Peace was upon him; Or, that chastisement (which did meritoriously procure our Peace) was upon him. God directed all the war against him, that wee might have Peace: As *Jonah* was thrown into the Sea, that the storm might cease; so Christ upon the Cross, into the Grave, that God and wee might bee at peace together.

But Christ is not only our Peace thus meritoriously by procuring Peace for us; But also,

2. Efficiently, by working of Peace in us. Christ hath not only wrought Peace for us, but hee works Peace in us; Pacifying our Consciences, calming our stormy spirits, settling and establishing his Peace in us.

Christ is called the Prince of Peace; as the King is the Fountain of Honours, and bestows them where hee will; so Christ is of Peace, and bestows it when and where hee pleaseth.

Wee

Wee read that *Moses* was a man of Peace: but hee was not a Prince of Peace. Hee could not bestow Peace: hee could not instill peaceable and calm affections into the mutinous Israelites.

But *Christ*, hee is not a man of Peace: but *King of Salem*, Prince of Peace; who is able to bestow Peace; who can calm the most stormy and troublesome spirits, with as much ease, as hee did the Winds and Waters; which was but with a word -- *Peace and bee still*.

Now *Faith* makes us one with *Christ*, who is the Prince of Peace. *Christ* joyned God and us together, and *Faith* joynes *Christ* and us together; in whom wee have Peace, *John*. 16, 33. -- *In mee yee shall have Peace*. *Faith* makes us subjects to this Prince of Peace, whose Kingdome and reign over his people doth not consist in meat and drink, but in Righteousnesse, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

3. *Faith* doth interest us into the Covenant of Peace; and therefore being Beleevers, wee must needs have Peace. I say, *Faith* doth interest us into the Covenant of Peace; the Gospel of Peace; the alone condition whereof is beleeving. -- *Whosoever beleeueth shall bee saved*.

Time was, that [*Hoc age*: do this] was the condition of life. -- *do this and live*. So ran the old Covenant: But now [*Crede*: Beleeve: and bee saved] The Law required works. It's called a Covenant of Works: but the Gospel *Faith*: Its a Covenant of Grace, Made out of meer Grace, and performed of meer Grace, wherein God promiseth pardon of sins, upon meer Mercy and Grace.

4. *Faith* doth instate us into the conditions of Peace. *Faith* gives us the grounds of Peace, Justification, Reconciliation with God, pardon of sin, and Sanctification of the whole man. As there is no Peace, where God is not propitious; so there's no Peace where the sinner is not sanctified.

A Beleeving heart is an holy heart: and an holy heart is a peaceable heart. Grace and Peace: and Righteousnesse, and Peace, are still coupled together. To shew, that where there is no Grace, there is no Peace: and where there is Grace, there is Peace, though not ever in the Possession, and sensible injoyment; yet ever in the hope and assurance of the promise of Peace. Grace is the root, and Peace is the fruit. -- *A good Conscience is a continual Feast*. They who do the work of God, shall have the Peace of God, *Gal*. 6. -- *They who walk according to this Rule, Peace shall bee on them, &c*. Hence the Psalmist, *Psal*. 119. 165. -- *Great Peace have they that love thy Law*. They which love the Law of God, shall have the Peace of God.

Gratia est bonum initiale.
Pax est bonum finale.

Object.

Object. But you will say. *Many have Peace, who yet are not Beleevers*. And *many are Beleevers, and yet want Peace*. Therefore *Peace is not a Fruit of Faith*,

Ans.

Ans. Now to meet and to resist this Objection, which like a two-edged-sword, strikes both ways.

For the first. *Many have Peace, who yet are not Believers.* I grant it. *Many who are unbelievers have quiet Peace. -- Are not in trouble as other men,* Psal. 7. 3, 5.

1. A Peace they have; but it is a false Peace. And a true war is better than a false Peace.

2. A Peace they have: but it is not the Peace of God, rather the Peace of the Devil. -- *The strong man keeps the house, and therefore all is at Peace.*

3. A Peace they have, but it is but an outward Peace: not an inward Peace. -- *The heart knows its own bitterness -- even in the midst of laughter, the heart is sorrowfull,* when the Countenance is full of cheer, the Conscience is full of woe.

As the godly have often the Pearle of Joy in the Heart, when the dew of tears is in their eyes: so the wicked

4 A Peace they have, but it is but the Peace of a dreaming, sleeping man: not the Peace of a man awakened, or it is but

5. A Peace of a condemned man, before his Execution: The Peace of a calm before a storm.

I have shewed you, there is a fourfold Conscience.

1. Good and quiet.

2. Not good, nor quiet.

3. Good, but not quiet.

4. Quiet, but not good, which quiet doth arise partly.

From ignorance of their condition: or

From carnal security: or

From brawniness of Conscience, want of inquiry into Conscience. But it is far from true Peace. Sure I am. Where there is no Grace, there is no Peace. Hence saith one, Peace is the inheritance of Saints, only. 'Twas all the Legacy which the Prince of Peace left to his Subjects. -- *Peace I leave with you, my Peace*

Pax non est, ubi non est Gratia. Pax est Hereditas Sanctorum.

I give unto you, Joh. 14. 27.

There may bee godlinesse without Peace, for a time; but there can bee no Peace without godlinesse. As *Jehu* said to *Jehoram*, -- *What Peace? so long as the Whoredomes of thy Mother, and her Witchcrafts bee so many?* So I say to you. *What Peace?*

-- *There is no Peace, saith my God to the wicked,* Isa. 57. 21.

1. They have no Peace with God: God is their enemy.

2. They have no Peace with Conscience: that is full of storms: as one said of *Jonah*, *ubi peccatum, ibi procella*: Where sin is, there is a storm. A sinfull Conscience, is a stormy Conscience: though for the present it is quiet: yet it is like a Book bound up, wherein, if ever it bee unclasped, if ever it bee opened; nothing but hellish Tragedies will appear.

And, that Peace thou hast in a sinfull way, it is a fore-runner of

of eternal war: it is but like the Peace of the old World -- *They ate, they drank, they married, and gave in marriage, till at last the flood came, and swept them all away*, Luk. 17. 27. -- It is but the Peace of Sodom, the Peace of Agag, the Peace of Joab, and Shimai, the Peace of Eli's house: the Peace of all ungodly men -- *who, when they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction, as travel up on a woman with child; so that they shall not escape*, 1 Thes. 5. 3.

Object. 2. *The second part of the Objection is, Many are Beleevers, who yet want Peace.*

Ans. Indeed the best have no perfection of Peace, because they want a perfection of Grace. They have no perfection of Peace, because they have not the perfection of Faith, the perfection of Grace.

If there were a perfection of Grace, then there might be a perfection of Peace. But the perfection of both is reserved to another world.

Though sometimes Beleevers may have such a Peace as may overcome all doubts, fears, troubles, &c. yet ordinarily their Peace is not so high. There is doubting as well as confidence; fear as well as Faith; trouble as well as Peace. *

The Peace of the godly here is a peace joyned with war. Our inward Peace is joyned with inward War, war against sin and corruption. It is such a Peace as doth not consist in freedome from war; but in an actual warring: *The Flesh still lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh*. And, till this great Make-bate bee taken away, till sin bee destroyed, wee must look for no perfect Peace.

2. But secondly. You say; Beleevers want Peace. It may bee they do: They want the sense of Peace, but not the ground of Peace. They have the ground of Peace, interest in *Christ*, Reconciliation with God, Justification, pardon of sin, Sanctification; although for present, they want the sense of Peace, the clear apprehensions of all this to their Souls.

They have Peace with God, *Rom. 5. 1.* But they want Peace with themselves. The direct act of Faith gives a man Peace with God, *Isa. 27. 5.* -- *Let him take hold of my strength, and I will be at Peace with him.* But the Reflect act of Faith is it which gives a man Peace within himself. A man may have the one, and yet want the other.

3. It may bee they hold some secret Compliance with some secret and sweet corruption. There may bee some secret *Jenah*, which lies under hatches; some secret *Achan*, which lies undiscovered; some secret close corruption, which may cause God to make war against his own people, and deny them Peace.

And therefore, in this case wee must do as the Mariners in the storm; as *Israel* in their trouble; cast lots: enter upon inquiry, what that is, that troubles our Peace; and then cast him overboard,

board, that our hearts may bee calmed.

Wee have a passage worth observation, 2 Sam. 20. from vers. 16. to 23. *Joab besieged Abel, and threatned war. A woman cries out from the City, to know the cause. Hee returns her answer. -- There was one Sheba the son of Bichri, who was a traitor to the King. Cast his head over the Wall, and all shall bee at Peace; which done, Joab, and all Israel retired every man to his tent, and there was a Peace.*

Thus God doth oftentimes besiege one of his own Subjects, because they harbour some secret Traitor, some close lust and corruption. And therefore it would bee our wisdom to inquire and finde out the Traitor: to yeeld up our sins, and God will bee at Peace with us; whereas otherwise God will never bee at Peace with him, who is at Peace with his lusts; nor spare him, that spares his sin.

4. It may bee they want present Peace, because for present, they are in warring conditions,

1. In great Combates with lusts and corruptions.

2. In great Conflicts with Satan.

3. In sad deserted conditions. At which times they may want the sense of Peace.

The Son is now in the pursuit of Peace. And, though with *Rebekah*, they have some struggling in the womb for a time: yet God will part the womb at last -- *Hee will speak Peace to his People at last: hee will break the Cloud, and discover himself.*

5. You say, Believers want Peace.

But it is, not as they are Believers, but as they are Doubters. If they had more Faith, they would have more Peace.

It may bee they give way to jealous mis-giving, and mistrusting thoughts of God, or of themselves.

Some there are who do nothing but make objections against themselves, and Gods dealings with them. And a quarrellsome heart is for the most part, a troublesome heart.

You shall see some to whom God hath given evidences of their estate and condition, and such as might content them, such as they might have Peace in: But they will quarrel against them.

Either their evidences are not so clear as others are; not written in so fair and legible characters as others are.

Or else they want sealing. And therefore they will take no comfort in them.

Thus do many forsake their own mercies, breed their own disquiet, and are injurious to their own peace. *When God hath spoken Peace, and Peace to their Souls: yet they return back again to folly, to the folly of Unbelieving, Doubting, Questioning of Gods love: And no marvel, if such do want Peace.*

Men, that will forgoe their evidences, give up their claim and title to *Christ*. Men whom Satan can make unsay what they know

God hath said to their hearts, may soon fit down in dumb silence and discouragement.

If when God hath manifested himself to you, hath come and supped with you; hath given you the white stone of absolution, the Hidden *Manna* of comfort and consolation; those manifest experiments of his love: and yet you will joyn Issue with Satan, give way to doubts: No marvel if you disturb your peace; bring insufferable fears and disquiets upon your selves. And it were just with God, to leave you to the doubts and mis-givings of your own hearts; and never to give you a word of Peace more: but suffer you to bring your gray hairs with sorrow to the Grave; seeing nothing will satisfy you.

6. The Reason why Beleevers have no more Peace, is, Because they seek Peace no more in a way of beleeving. They seek it more in the Law, than in the Gospel: more in Sanctification than in Justification: more in the Precept than in the Promise: more in working, than in beleeving: more in their Obedience than in *Christ*.

And therefore no marvel, seeing all this is imperfect, that they have no more perfection of peace.

So long as you make the grounds of your peace any thing within your selves, or any thing wrought by your selves; you will never have fulness of peace.

There may bee some peace for a time in these things: but it is not a full and satisfying peace; nor yet a permanent and constant peace. It may be gotten to day, lost, or incumbered to morrow.

Every Imperfection will disturb your peace. Every failing will raise up a new and fresh storm, breed a new quarrel in the soul.

Hee that would have peace, must seek it in the God of Peace; in the Prince of Peace, in *Christ* himself; in whom hee said, *Joh. 18. 33.* -- *Wee should have Peace.*

When there's a storm in your selves, there's peace in him: when there's no peace in you in regard of your imperfections and failings; there's yet peace in *Christ*, who is a perfect Saviour. The Sacrifice is imperfect, but the Priest is perfect.

Tenth Royalty.

10 Faith is an Heart-inabling-Grace.

30. Royalty of
Faith: Its an
Heart-in-
abling-Grace.

It is such a Grace as enables a man,

1. To do.

2. To suffer.

A Beleeving Christian is a Strong Christian. He is strong for any service. It is said; -- *By Faith Abraham obeyed God.* Faith did enable him to obey. And it was a great act of Obedience, as you may read; *scil.* The offering of his Son, his only Son, the Son of his love.

love. If it had been an adopted Son only, and not his Natural, or if his Natural, and but one among many, the trial had not been so great. But hee was his own, and only Son, and the Son of his old age; and therefore like to have no more; the Son of the promise; not an *Ismael*, but an *Isaac*, a Son long expected; now exceedingly rejoyced in; hee was the Son of his Love. Now to part with such a Son was a great tryal.

But here was not all the tryal. If hee had but parted with him in the way of Nature, by a natural death, this had not been so much: but to part with him in way of Sacrifice, wherein hee was to bee cut in peeces; nay, and hee himself must bee the Butcher of this Son of his Love; must imbrue his own hands in the blood of this Son. This was a great tryal; yet here was seen the power of Faith, tht it inabled him to obey. Hee did not consult with Flesh and Blood; did not dispute, but obey -- *By Faith hee obeyed.*

Faith it is an Heart-inabling-Grace. It will inable you to pray; yea, and to pray to purpose, to wrestle with God. Beleeving-prayers, are wrestling prayers; wherein the Soul wrestles with God by strength of his Promise, his Covenant, his Truth, his Christ.

It inables you to hear, and to hear with profit: when Faith doth incorporate it self with the Word, it will be profitable. *Faithful hearing is ever fruitful hearing.*

It will inable you to receive the Sacrament, and to receive with comfort. Faith is the Organ, whereby wee feed on *Christ*; receive *Christ*. Faith is the instrument that conveyes *Christ* the Conduite-pipe.

A beleeving Receiver is a blessed Receiver.

It will inable you to bring forth much fruit, To bee fruitful in Obedience. It plants us into a fruitfull stock; and how can wee bee barren Plants? It draws life and nourishment from *Christ*. A faithfull Christian is a fruitfull Christian. Men of a good Beleeef, are men of a good Life. That soul that hath yeelded obedience to the Promise, in a way of beleeving, is ready to subject it self to every Precept, in a way of Obedience.

Faith doth inable a man to contend with lusts, with the strongest corruptions; -- *The sons of Zerviah*, which else would bee too hard for us.

It inables us to combate with Satan. It is our shield; whereby wee resist; it is our weapon, whereby wee conquer; It sets *Christ* against Satan, by whom wee over-overcome, as the word is, *Wee are -- more than Conquerors.*

It inables us to overcome the World -- *This is our Victory* whereby by wee overcome the World -- even our Faith.

Whereas unbeleef doth slay and disable the heart, both from doing and suffering. An unbeleeving heart is an impotent heart. The state of unbeleef is a state of impotency and disability; to the performance of any thing, that is good. There is a total, and uni-

verfal impotency in an unbelieving heart. Hee cannot pray, hear, receive.

Faith, on the contrary doth inable and strengthen the soul to all Obedience. It inables a man to yeeld.

A willing Obedience, cheerfull Obedience, voluntary Obedience; a constant, a fruitfull, an universal Obedience. It will inable a man to do his duty,

Towards God,

Towards others,

Towards himself. It inables a man to walk through the duties of all relations faithfully. The Husband to the Wife: The Wife to the Husband, The Parent to the Child; The Child to the Parent; The Master to the Servant; The Servant to the Master, &c.

Faith is the great Task-Master of the Soul. But it is not like *Pharaohs* Task-Master, to command burdens, and afford no help: To require the Tale of Brick, and give no Straw. This indeed the Law doth. It is an hard Task-Master. It commands; but gives no ability.

Jubet; sed non
juvat.
Efficit quod
imperat. Jubet
& juvat.

But not so Faith. It commands, and laies in strength to do. It gives what it commands; by going over to *Christ*, and fetching strength from him; whereby the soul is inabled to obey what it is commanded.

It is said of *Christ*, That -- *His Government shall bee upon his shoulders*: Not only in his hand having a Scepter only to command, but upon his shoulders, wherein there is support to obey commands. So it may bee said of Faith, which governeth from *Christ*, and by *Christ*, Its Government is upon its shoulder; inabling the soul to do what it commands.

1. Faith begets *Soul-inabling-Principles*; Principles in the soul suitable to the thing commanded; whereby a man is inabled to obey.

All strength for new Obedience ariseth from a new Nature. And this new Nature is nothing else, but that conformity to the Law of God, whereby a man is not only able to obey, but willing to obey: when Principles are wrought in our hearts suitable to the Precepts: when there is a Law within us, answering to the Law without us: -- It will be meat and drink; it will be natural too: it is not now hard to pray to hear. -- *The yoke is easy, the burden is light*. These things are not tasks but delights; not medicines, but meat, not phylick, but food, *Psal. 40.* -- *I delight to do thy Will*, saith *David*: and what was the ground? --- *Thy Law is in my heart*. There were Principles agreeable to the Precepts, and that made him not only to obey, but to obey with delight.

2. Faith supplies a man with *Soul-inabling-Strength*, from without. Wee have need not only of preventing, but assisting Grace: not only of operative, but cooperative strength: not only of inherent, but of assistant, the continual succours, aids and supplies of the

the Spirit of Christ. And Faith doth supply the soul with strength from him, -- without whom we can do nothing, and through whose might we are enabled to do all things.

Faith laies in supplies of strength from Christ, wherewith we are enabled for any service. It calls in for all the strength of Christ, the aids of the Spirit, whereby we are strengthened.

3. Faith doth furnish a man with Soul-inabling-considerations.

1. From God, the mercies of God, the goodness and sweetness of God; All which do incourage and enable the soul to obey. A loving Master makes a diligent Servant. A mercifull God, a working Christian. Nothing doth so prevail with the heart as love.-- *The Love of Christ constrains us.*

When Faith shall discover to the heart what we were, what we are, what God might, what God hath done with us, it will break out with David with a-- *Quid Retribuam, &c. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of Salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows, &c.* Psal. 116. 12. This overcomes the Soul with Love. That heart that is overcome with the sweetness of mercy, is prepared to overcome any difficulty of service. -- *My heart is prepared, my heart is prepared.*

2. From the work. Faith furnishes a man with soul-inabling-considerations from the excellency of the employments: hee sees a peece of Heaven in them: hee sees these services full of beauty, sweetness, desireableness, No service to the service of the King. Oh! what then is the service of the King of Kings.

3. From the rewards which God hath promised to obedience. And these rewards Faith makes use of, to quicken and stir up the soul to Obedience; to bee spurs and incentives to us, as they were to Moses, who -- *had an eye to the recompence of the Rewards;* as they were to Christ himself; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the shame, Heb. 12. 2, and Heb. 11. 26. All which have a mighty influence into the soul, to enable and quicken it to Obedience.

2. Faith enables the Soul to suffer. Yea, and to suffer the sufferings of the greatest magnitude. You see, Heb. 11. -- *Through Faith they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were slain with the sword.*

1. It puts the soul into a suffering frame. It deadens a mans heart to the world; mortifies a man to the world; and makes a man alive to God.

A man dead to the world doth not much care either to leave the world, or any thing in the world: now Faith deadens a mans heart to the World.

1. Faith puts the Judgement into a right frame. It makes the Judgement lightly to esteem of earthly, and highly to esteem of Heavenly things: lightly to esteem the favours and frowns of men,

men, highly to value the favour, and fear the frowns of God.

2. Faith prevails with the Will, to chuse God above all; and to part with all, to leave all, if they come in competition with God. This Faith doth habitually, in habituall preparations in the work of Grace, when first the Will chuseth with *Christ*. Thus Faith inables the soul to do actually, when ever it is brought to try-all.

3. Faith works upon the Affections, to love God above all, to delight in God, to fear him, &c.

A man, who loues any thing, chuseth any thing, prizeth any thing above God, is a man unfit for sufferings: hee is not in a suffering frame. If God and these things come in competition, they with *Demas* will forsake God, and cleave to the present world. Men, whose hearts are too much ingaged to the World; whose affections are too much set upon the Creature: men, whose wills chuse any thing more than God: whose Judgements do prize and esteem of any thing more than God; to whom God is little, and the world is great: these men are unfit for tryals.

And therefore this is the first way, whereby *Faith doth inable the Soul*, by putting it into a suffering frame.

2. Faith doth furnish the soul with suffering Resolutions. A beleeving heart is a resolved heart. Nothing causeth a suspension in the Will more than Unbeleef. Hee that doubteth is like a wave of the Sea, sometimes going this way, and sometimes carried back again. Whereas Faith doth resolve the heart, makes the soul resolve as *Peter*, but in a better strength, -- *I will dye, rather than deny thee*.

Faith doth cloathie the soul with suffering resolutions, to go through a Sea, through a Wildernels, through the hottest Skirmishes, the hardest Tryals for *Christ*. You see it every where in Scripture. In *Michaiah*, in *Jeremiah*, in the three Children, in *Daniel*, in the Apostles. And to these I might adde many more. As that of old *Polycarp*; when hee was perswaded to deny *Christ*, rather than to dye for *Christ*. -- *These fourscore and six years I have served Christ; and hee hath never hurt mee all this time; and how then can I blaspheme my King and Saviour*.

ὁ γὰρ ὁ κωνσταντῖνος
μι ἐξ ἑτη ἔχω
ἀσκήσειν αὐ-
τῷ, &c.

Fac quod tibi
præceptum est.

The like of *Cyprian*, who being desired to consult with himself, before hee should suffer, replies. -- *Do your office. In so just a thing as this there needs no Consultation*.

The like of that rich Virgin which *Basil* speaks of; who being condemned to the fire, was offered her life and estate, if she would renounce her Faith; shee returns *Waleat vita; pereat pecunia, &c.* Let my many perish, my life cannot: and though I lose this life, I shall have a more enduring, a more abiding, a more abounding life in *Christ*.

To these many more might bee added, to shew how Faith doth furnish the Soul with suffering Resolutions, as that of *Chrysostome*

softome, who said -- if you take away my goods, &c.

3. Faith begets suffering graces, courage, magnanimity, patience, humility, self-denial, contempt of the World, high prizing of God. It sets God above all the comforts and contentments in Heaven and Earth, It gives adherence to the Truth, by which the Soul is inabled to undergo any thing.

4. It laies in suffering-strength: strength from God; strength from the Promise, which faith -- *When thou passest through the water, it shall not overflow thee, when thou passest through the fire, it shall not kindle upon thee, &c.* Isa. 43. 2. It fetcheth strength from Christ, who like Simon of Cyrene, helps to bear part of every Cross.

Thus Faith goes out of it self; stands upon anothers bottome; leans upon anothers power; rests upon anothers strength, whereby the Soul is inabled to go thorow any thing. All this is conveyed by this Instrument of Faith.

5. It propounds to the Soul suffering-rewards. That -- *For these light afflictions which are but for a moment, wee shall receive a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.*

That for the los of temporals wee shall gain eternals. That *If wee suffer with Christ, wee shall reign with Christ.*

"That No man shall lose Father or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, or Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, for his Names sake: but hee shall receive an hundred fold more, here, and shall inherit everlasting life, Matth. 19. 29. God will bee all this to thee. Nay, God will bee more than all this to thee. More than Riches, more than Friends, more than Life it self unto thee.

All which considerations do exceedingly inable the Soul to undergo sufferings and tryals.

Eleventh Royalty.

11. Faith is an Heart-in-nobling-Grace.

That which sets one man above another: That which doth raise up and exalt one man above another, in Gods esteem, is Faith, that which doth put a difference between man and man, is Faith or nothing, *Acts. 15. 9.*

1. Faith is such a Grace as sets us above others, our Persons above others. A Grace which makes us Kings, and Priests unto God, which raises us, and sets us out of the croud. They are noble, whom God doth in-noble: honourable, whom God doth honour. *God is the King of Kings, the Fountain of all Honour, who can exalt whom hee pleaseth, and throw down whom hee pleaseth, who can in-noble whom hee pleaseth, and abase whom hee will. And this honour have all his Saints.*

This hath God thrown upon the poorest Believer, hee hath made

11. Royalty of Faith. Its a Soul-in-nobling-Grace.

made him a King, and a Priest, *Rev. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5. 9.*

2. Faith sets our performances above others. Our prayers, our duties, our obedience. Faith raises them above others, *Heb. 11. 4.* -- By Faith Abel offered to God a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain. Cain offered Sacrifice as well as Abel: But Faith put the difference betwixt them. -- By Faith hee offered a more excellent, a more noble Sacrifice than Cain.

Faith puts a difference betwixt the works of Christians, and the works of Heathens. Though there were no difference for the matter, yet Faith puts a vast difference for the manner.

Faith puts a difference betwixt the *Abba-Fathers* of a Child, of a Saint: and the *Ave-Maries*, of a superstitious Papist: betwixt the Prayers of a Saint, and the Devotions of a sinner: betwixt the cries of a Saint, and the howlings of an Hypocrite. But to return,

Faith is an *Heart-in-nobling-Grace*.

1. It begets in us *Soul-in-nobling-Principles*. Principles like our selves. It is such a Grace as doth sublimize a man, begets high, glorious, and heavenly Principles in the soul. By this wee are -- made partakers of the divine nature. It is an *Heart-spiritualizing-Grace*.

Whereas Unbelief doth sensuallize a man, beasts a man, as *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan. 5. 20. 21.* Hence wee read, *An Unbelieving heart is called a gross heart, -- make their heart gross:* because it is conversant about gross and sensual things only: so Faith doth raise up a man, spiritualizes a man. *A Believing heart is a fine heart, a spiritual heart, It refines the soul.*

Faith doth raise up a man as high above reason, as reason doth raise a man above meer sense. It sets a man as high above a man, as Reason doth a man above a Beast.

Faith is the Spirit of Grace. Not only a spiritual Grace: but the Spirit of all our spiritual Graces. It hath nothing but spirituality in it, and hath to do with nothing but spiritual things; with God, with Christ, with Heaven, with Justification, pardon of sin. All which are spiritual things; far above sense, nay, and Reason too: their objects reach not so high, which things though they bee Real, and none more Real, yet they are spiritually Real, not sensually; Real to Faith, not to sense, nor to Reason neither. And therefore unbelieving men do esteem these things either *meer-nothings*; or they are next door to *nothing* in their thoughts, *Imaginary things: Notiones secundae*: which have no foundation in Being, no existence in the World.

2. Faith doth implant us into *Soul-in-nobling-Relations*.

1. It makes us *Servants to the great God of Heaven and Earth*, who (though it were Hyperbolically said of *Tyrus Merchants*, yet may it truly bee said of God) *makes all his servants Kings.* Gods service is an honourable, a noble service. Nay, it makes us not only Servants, but

2. It makes us friends of God. *Abraham a Believer, was call'd Gods Friend: nay, not only Friends, but*

3. It makes us *Sons and Daughters of God*. -- Gal. 3. 26. -- *You are the Children of God by Faith.* Wee may glory in our Pedegree. A Believer is best born, nobly born, *Jam. 1. 18.* -- *Of his own Will begat hee us, by the Word of Truth,* Joh. 1. 13. -- *Born of God. Nay*

4. It makes us the Spouse of *Christ*, who is such an Husband as doth en-noble his Wife. Wee know among men, The Wife is honoured with her Husbands honour. The Lawyers have a speech, -- *Mulier fulget Radia Mariti.* The Wife shines with the Husbands Rayes: shee shines with his brightness. If hee bee honourable; whatever shee was before, yet now shee cannot bee base: If hee bee noble, shee cannot bee ignoble, because hee confers and throws all his honours upon his Wife.

So here, by Faith, being made the Spouse of *Christ*, *Christ* doth en-noble his Spouse: *Christ* doth adorn, and beautifie his Spouse, *Ezek. 16. 10, 11, 12, 13.* -- *I cloathed thee with broidred work, and shed thee, and covered thee with silk. I decked thee with ornaments, &c.* Wee shine with the beams of his Justice, Holiness, Riches, Graces. -- *Christ is made to us Wisdome, Justification, Sanctification, and Redemption,* 1 Cor. 1. 30. -- *Of his fulness wee all have received, and Grace for Grace,* Joh. 1. 16. -- *Nay*

5. Faith makes us the Members of *Christ*, who is such an Head as doth en-noble his Members. *Christ* throws more Glory and Honour upon the meanest Member of his Body, than all the World is able to make us heirs of. It were better to bee the meanest Member of *Christ*, than to have all the Glory of the World, out of *Christ*; better to bee the meanest twig in this Vine, than to bee the most glorious branch in the World, out of *Christ*: *Better it is not to bee at all, than not to bee in Christ.*

Melius non esse, quam sine Christo esse.

3. Faith puts us upon Soul-in-nobling employments.

It puts a man upon Prayer, Holy exercises, Communion with God; which are noble Employments, above the World. Faith makes the soul live high, above the World, above the Earth. Faith carries the soul to Heaven, makes it live where it had its first breath, and being, makes our way to lye above, our Conversion to bee in Heaven, our joyes to bee there, our affections there, our hearts there. -- *By Faith Enoch walked with God*; hee conversed with God, had to do with God daily, the great God of Heaven and Earth daily in supplications and meditations, and holy conversation. All which are noble employments. The higher the person wee have to do withall, the more noble are the employments.

And they are such as do in-noble the Soul. No man hath to do with God in any way, but hee is in-nobled by it. -- *Moses face shone*, when hee had been conversing with God. God doth shed

Glory upon all those, who have to do with him. None have to do with a glorious God, but are made glorious. None with an Holy God, but are made holy. If you have to do with him in Prayer, or any of his Ordinances, hee sends you still better away.

4. Faith doth intitle us unto a Soul-in-nobling Inheritance: unto Heaven, unto Glory. It makes us not only Sons of God, but Heirs. Every Son is an Heir, nay, and a Joint-Heir with *Christ*, unto that eternal inheritance of Glory, *Rom. 8. 17.* Hence the Apostle, *1 Joh. 3. 2.* -- *Now wee are the Sons of God: but it doth not yet appear what wee shall bee, but wee know when hee shall appear, wee shall bee like him, for wee shall see him as hee is. -- Then when Christ who is our life shall appear, wee shall also appear with him in Glory, Col. 3. 4.*

Wee shall bee Citizens of Heaven. Faith doth intitle us to Crowns of Glory. -- *To that House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, 2 Cor. 5. 1. To an inheritance, incorruptible, and that fadeth not, reserved in Heaven for us, 1 Pet. 1. 5. -- To a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory, 1 Cor. 4. 17.*

Which Inheritance is so certain, by Faith to Beleevers, that the Apostle saith, -- *Wee sit together with him in heavenly places, Ephes. 2. 6.* wee sit now with him in respect of our Union by Faith; and shall sit with him hereafter, in our Communion with his Glory, when wee shall bee invested with those Royal Robes of Glory.

Thus you see *Faith* is a *Soul-in-nobling-Grace*. It makes God a Father, *Christ* a Brother, Angels fellow-servants, Heaven our Inheritance. It brings a man into a noble kindred, a noble family, the family of Heaven, and makes all the family of Heaven our kindred. It brings a man unto noble acquaintance; puts a man upon noble employments; intitles a man unto a noble inheritance: invests us with in-nobling Priviledges; and begets us a noble spirit, a spirit suitable to all these; suitable to our Father, our Kindred, our Acquaintance, our Employments, our Inheritance.

The whole frame of Christianity turns upon the hinge of Faith. As the Bloud through the veins, so Faith runs through every vein of the whole body of Religion. It is the staff of our strength, the support of all our comfort, and the life of our soul.

In my discourse, of which I have (though indeed the Priviledges of Faith requires an Angel rather than a Man, to make relation of it; yet I say, I have) adventured to lay down diverse Royalties and Priviledges of this Grace: wherein all that I have said, or can say, falls short of the excellency of it. When I have told you what I can, you may say (as the Queen of *Sheba*, when shee found the Truth to exceed the Relation) that the one half hath not been told you. *Celum & Deus: so Celum & Fides non patiuntur Hyperbolen.* I cannot here Hyperbolize. I cannot play the

Mounte-

Mountebank; to set down more in the Bill than is in the Physick: more in the Relation than is in the Balsome. All I can say will fall short of the preciousness of Faith.

Yet mistake mee not, whatever I have said, or shall say of Faith, I speak not of Faith absolutely, but of Faith relatively: The Act with its Object. Wee will not make a *Christ of Faith*, nor raise up Faith any higher, than wee may set up *Christ* with it, by it, above it. Well then, to proceed, wee have laid down diverse glorious Priviledges, or Royalties of Faith: wee have yet more remaining such as these.

Twelfth Royalty.

12. Faith is a Soul-fatning-Grace.

The beleieving Christian is the thriving Christian. It is such a Grace as doth nourish and strengthen the soul. It weakens corruption, but strengthens Grace. It starves the flesh, but fattens the spirit.

12. Royalty of Faith. Is a Soul-fatning-Grace.

It is indeed a fin-starving-Grace. Faith will not feed and fuel lust. It will neither entertain nor maintain corruptions. Faith will abridge fin of that nourishment, those dainty bits which it met withall in an unbeleiving heart. It will not lay in provision for lust.

Unbeleef is the *Caterer* and the *Provider* for sin. Sin hath its full desire in an unbeleiving heart; whatever it lusts after, it shall have: nothing shall bee wanting to feed lust.

If a man bee addicted to the lust of uncleanness: there is nothing the lust doth desire, but an unbeleiving heart will make a supply of. It shall have Books, Ballads, Plaies for the purpose. It shall have obscene objects, and pictures to gaze upon. There shall bee nothing wanting for the fomenting and cherishing of the corruption: nothing shall bee denied, that may pile and increase the flame of lust. All a man hath, all his power, all his riches, his estate shall bee laid out for the fewelling of his corruption, and so he might shew in other lusts.

12. Royalty of Faith. Is a Soul-fatning-Grace.

But now Faith, it starves sin: it will not hold out the dagger to nourish a corruption: It will -- *not provide for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*: It will abridge sin, and cut it short of those dainty bits, which formerly it had in the soul: It will not afford it a thought, a motion, a look, nor any thing that may fewel it, or feed it.

It is a fin-starving-Grace. But though it starve the flesh, it fattens the spirit. It is a soul-fatning-Grace, which it doth after this manner.

First Preparatory way.

way. By destroying Soul-consuming, Soul-destroying, Soul-

1. By a Negative *Permodum removendi* pining

pinning lusts and corruptions, which will hinder our spiritual-fattening.

Men use to purge, before they go to fatten. Faith must give the soul a purge: otherwise the soul would never thrive; though the pasture bee never so good. If there bee corruptions in the soul unpurged, the soul will never grow and thrive.

If a Child do secretly feed upon Chalk or Dirt, or such like trash, it will never grow nor thrive: though the food it eats bee never so good and wholesome meat.

So if the Soul do secretly feed upon some secret lust or corruption, it will never grow, never thrive, though the food it feeds upon bee never so nourishing.

And therefore Faith doth purge the heart of lust and corruption, which may hinder our spiritual growth. Faith cuts off the suckers from the Tree, which doth eat out the heart of the roor, and hinder the growth of the Tree. Faith takes the Child from the Dugge, which consumes the Parent. Faith will separate a man from his lust, and will not suffer a corruption to hang upon us, to hinder our spirituall growth.

2. Faith doth put a man into a Soul-fattening-pasture. The whole Word of God is the Pasture for Faith. The Word of God is *objectum Adequatum*, the Even and Adequate object of Faith. There is the only walk of Faith, which, though it bee an inclosed Pasture, a Field inclosed, a Pasture paled in: yet there is enough in it to satisfy Faith. Wee shall not need to stray any whither else for want of Pasture, here wee may go in, and go out, and finde Pasture, wee shall not need to feed upon stubble and straw of humane traditions: here's enough in it to nourish us up to eternal life. -- *The Scriptures are perfect, and able to make perfect the man of God to every good work*, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Here is Milk for Babes, and meat for stronger men. -- Here the tallest Elephant may swim, and the poorest Lamb may wade. Great and small, strong and weak may finde nourishment in the Scripture. Here wee may finde nourishment for our Knowledge, for our love, for our zeal, patience, humility, and all our Graces. They are able to make a man wise to Salvation. They nourish our Obedience.

Parvuli, magniforces, infirmi habent in Scripturis unde alantur & satiantur.

Wouldst thou then nourish thy Knowledge? Read here. The Scriptures are able to make thee wise to Salvation.

Wouldst thou nourish thy Faith? Read here upon those Faith-strengthening Promises, God hath made for that purpose.

Wouldst thou nourish thy Love? Oh, Read here of the Love of God to thee, that height, depth, that length and breadth of his love in Christ, That love that passeth Knowledge, And this will bee a burning-Glass to kindle love and affections to him. This will bee as the Load-stone to draw thee. Read here of the excellencies of God, which may draw thy affections.

Wouldst thou nourish thy Humility? Oh, Read here, what thou

thou wast by Nature. Look into the Glass of the Law. That will discover thy vileness, lay thee in the dust. Read *Ezek. 16*. See what a peece thou wast, and then bee proud if thou canst.

Would'st thou nourish thy Zeal? Read here of the Zeal of others, which may kindle Zeal in thee.

Would'st thou nourish thy Patience? Read here examples of Patience, in *Job*, *Jeremiah* and others, whose long suffering will shame thy short breathed impatience.

Would'st thou nourish thy fear of God? Why here see what is the excellency of fear, &c.

3. Faith feeds upon Soul-fatning-Dainties: meat which the World knows not of, As *Christ* said, -- *I have meat, which you know not of*: So Faith hath meat, which the World knows not of. As the life of a Christian is an hidden life: so the food of a Christian, the meat of a Christian, is an hidden meat, an hidden *Manna*.

Faith feeds upon Soul-fatning-dainties, choice food, the cream of nourishment, and that is

1. Upon the Promises.

2. Upon *Christ* himself.

1. Faith feeds upon Soul-fatning-Promises. Indeed the whole Word of God is food for Faith, both the Precept, and the Promise: But Faith feeds chiefly upon the Promise, whereby it is enabled to walk in the Precept.

The whole Word of God is sincere Milk, whereby wee grow: and the Old and New Testament may bee called, The Breasts of Consolation, but the New is the better Breast. More of Gods heart and love runs in the New, than in the Old. The Children of the Bondwoman suck at the Breast of the Old, at the Law: But the Children of the Free-woman suck here, at this Breast, the Gospel.

Thus Faith, feeds, not only upon the Word: but the choice of the Word, the Promises. Yea, and not only the Promises, but the choice and freest of the Promises: the Cream, the spirits of Nourishment.

And according to the proportion of Faiths feeding hereon, such is the proportion of strength and nourishment conveyed down into the Soul. Hee that feeds sparingly, is but a spare Christian, gets but little strength: Hee that eats liberally is strongly nourished.

The difference that wee see in Christians here, some weak, others strong, Some Infants and Babes, others Grown men, some thrown down with every blast of Temptation, others able to stand out all assaults: The difference ariseth hence, that some feed more sparingly, some more liberally by Faith upon the Promises of Grace: and so some are stronger than others are.

If you grow not, 'tis because you feed not: you play with the Breast,

Breast, you suck not daily. A man may have meat before him, and yet dye, if hee feed not. The best feeder here is the best grower. The Larger the appetite, the stronger the Christian. The more the soul doth feed upon Promise, still the more strength is conveyed to the soul, the more the soul is nourished.

2. Faith feeds upon a Soul-fatning-*Christ*. The choicest dith that Faith doth feed upon is *Christ* himself.

Christ is food for the Soul -- *His Flesh is meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed.* And hee who feeds upon *Christ* most, is the most living, the most growing, the most fatning Christian.

Christ is the breeder, and the feeder of spiritual life: the begetter and the nourisher of life in us. Hence hee is call'd -- *The Bread of Life*. Not only bread to beget life in dead men: but bread to nourish and increase life in living men. And by Faith wee feed upon *Christ*; Faith is the Organ whereby wee feed upon *Christ*, and gets nourishment for it self, and all its fellow-Graces.

When Faith hath had a good meal here, all the Graces of Gods *Spirit* are bettered by it: our Love, Humility, &c. all are strengthened by it.

Now Faith feeds upon *Christ*

1. In the Word.

2. In the Sacrament.

Christ is Bread.

1. Spiritual. *Panis Spiritualis.*

2. Sacramental. *Panis Sacramentalis.*

Christ is Spiritual Bread in the Word, to beget and increase life.

Christ is Sacramental Bread in the Eucharist, to nourish and augment our Spiritual life in us.

The one is *Christ*, in Ordinary. *Christ* in the Word is the Dayly-Bread for Faith to feed upon.

The other is *Christ* Extraordinary, for Festival Gaudy-dayes. And in this order Faith feeds on *Christ*.

First, Faith feeds upon *Christ* in the Word; and then Secondly, Faith feeds upon *Christ* in the Sacrament.

None feed on *Christ* in the Sacrament, but they who have fed on *Christ* in the Word.

By the one wee have Union, by the other Communion with *Christ*: By the one ingraftment into *Christ*, by the other we have nourishment from *Christ*. By the one *Christ* is formed in us; by the other *Christ* grows up in us, to a perfect man.

Faith thus feeds upon *Christ*, who is the summe of all nourishing things: who is the heart, the staff of nourishment. Hence hee is called Bread, which is the staff of nourishment.

Christ is the heart of nourishment in the Word, in the Sacraments, in every Ordinance: All which are but empty things,

Christus grandis in Sanctis.

con-

convey no spiritual strength to us, if wee feed not upon *Christ* in them.

If *Christ* do withdraw himself from the Ordinances; If wee feed not upon *Christ* in them, they will do us no good. If wee feed not upon *Christ* in the Word, the Word will not profit. If wee feed not upon *Christ* in the Sacraments, the Sacraments will not nourish.

Men may live out their dayes under the Ordinances; come to the Word, and to the Sacraments; and yet, when all is done, bee like *Pharaohs lean Kine*, never the fatter for all this food, if they feed not upon *Christ* in them.

And it is suspicious, when men live under such precious Ordinances, and yet grow no more, that surely they feed not on *Christ*.

Alas! Could wee bee so barren in our Graces, so lean in our lives, seeing wee go in such rich Pastures, and are fed with such precious dainties, the Word, and Sacraments; if wee fed upon *Christ* in these? No, my Brethren, this is the great reason why wee have such pined and starved souls: This is the reason of all our weakneses, our spiritual faintings, our declinings, our consumptions under the Ordinances; wee feed not upon the Spirits of nourishment; wee feed not upon *Christ* in them: wee let not Faith feed on *Christ*, and so are not nourished. Wee eat the *Bread of the Lord*, but not the *Bread which is the Lord*: wee feed upon the *Elements*, not upon *Christ*. It is true here, *The pure Elements are no nourishment*. If *Christ* run not through the Bread and Wine they nourish not.

Panem Domini, non Panem Dominum, Purum Elementum non est Alimentum.

Well then; would you have your Soul nourished? take your fill of these *Soul-refreshing-Dainties*, whereby you may get strength. Here drink your fill. The best measure is no measure.

Bibite, & laetabimini.

Feed upon the Promises, feed upon *Christ*, whereby you may bee nourished. Feed on *Christ* daily. Sometimes wee have such a Feast on *Christ*, as, in the strength of which (with *Elijah*) wee go many dayes. God sometimes gives such abundance of *Refreshments*, that the Soul goes *cheerfully* a long time. But this is not *Ordinary*. And therefore there is need of our *Daily feeding upon Christ*. *Christ* must bee *Daily-Bread for Faith to feed on*. And it must bee our Prayer for the Soul, as well as for the Body -- *Give us our Daily-Bread* -- Bread for the Soul, as well as Bread for the Body.

That Day, wherein *Christ* hath not been fed on, is a *Declining-day*.

Thirteenth Royalty.

13. Faith is an Heart-Emptying-Grace.

13. Royalty of Faith. Its the Heart emptying-Grace.

There are two things, which are the most natural acts of Faith.

1. It.

1. It empties a man of himself.
2. It fills the Soul with Christ.

The Soul cannot bee fill'd with *Christ*, whilest it is full of it self. And therefore Faith doth first empty a man of himself, cast a man out of himself, and then fills the Soul with *Christ*.

Faith doth cut a man off his own stock, the stock of Nature, the stock of Death, before it doth ingraft us into *Christ*, the Stock of Life. Faith doth strip a man of his own cloaths, his own Garments, which are too short to cover him, before it puts on the Robes of *Christ*. It throws us off from our own bottom, whereon wee stand, before it set a man upon another Foundation. It makes a man poor in himself, before it enrich him with *Christ*. It empties a man of himself, before it fill the Soul with *Christ*.

Now there are two things in general, which Faith doth empty the Soul of,

1. Of all Opinion of Righteousness in our selves.
2. Of all Opinion of strength to help our selves.

1. It doth empty the Soul of that windy conceit, that Pharisaical Opinion of Righteousness in our selves. Faith doth not empty a man of any Righteousness, but of the false Opinion of Righteousness. It doth not empty us of any worth in our selves, there is none but of that fond conceit of worth in our selves. Faith makes us see "wee are worthless Creatures, Rev. 3. 17. 18. -- Thou saiest, I am "rich, and increased with goods: I have need of nothing: And "knowest not, that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and "blinde, and naked. -- I counsel thee to buy of mee Gold, that thou "maiest bee rich, &c.

My Brethren, wee are all of us naturally, full of our selves, full of the self of Pride, full of the self of Love, Self-love, full of Self-conceits, full of Self-sufficiency; wee are apt to think highly of our selves. Wee all hold of Adam in Capite; wee are all full of Pride. As Pride was the Fall of Adam, so it would bee the ruine of us.

Wee think wee are Rich, full, need nothing. As the Church did in the place afore quoted, Rev. 3. 17, 18.

Thus, where Faith comes, it empties a man of himself, his Self-conceits; it doth discover our selves, to our selves; makes us see our selves, as wee lye weltring in blood, in our own blood, Ezek. 16. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. even in the Blood of Guilt, and the Blood of Filth. It puts down those Towering thoughts, those Ayery imaginations, those Mountainous conceits which men had of themselves. It casts us out of our selves, makes us nothing in our selves; makes us poor in our selves, πτωχοι, as the word is, Mat. 5. 3. -- Beggars in Spirit: Poor Beggars. It makes us miserable in our selves, empty in our selves, blind, naked, lost in our selves. Faith makes us to see all this in our selves.

Faith makes us see, in stead of Righteousness, there's nothing but
Sin

Sin in us, in stead of beauty, blackness; in stead of comeliness, deformity. It discovers, there's nothing but *Damnation and Hell* in us; nothing but Hell in our parts, Hell in our Principles; Nay, Hell in our prayers; That not our persons only, but our prayers stand in need of *Christ*, that if hee save not our prayers, as well as our persons, our Prayers will damn us.

Faith is such a Grace as is raised up, upon the ruines of our selves, not the Substance, but the Sin; the ruine of our sinful selves: the ruine of our self of Pride, of Self-confidence, self-sufficiency, all which are thrown down, before Faith bee raised.

As the *Shipmans Fatal Star*, which they say, is never seen, but before wrack, and death: so Faith is never seen, but before the wrack and death of sinful nature, which hath one wrack by Faith, but the universal wrack by death. And this is the first work, and the mighty work of Faith, which must bee done, before wee come over to *Christ*. As the Opinion of something in themselves, was that which kept off the Jews from comming to *Christ*, so it doth us. And therefore Faith empties us of this Opinion, makes us poor, that so wee may bee fit to receive the Gospel. -- The poor receive the Gospel. The Gospel is but a merciful Hospital for the relief of the Poor, Blind, Naked, Lame, and lost sinners. Here's nothing for those, who are Rich and Full, and think they want nothing.

Faith empties the Soul of that Opinion of strength to help it self. Though a man were convinced, hee had nothing; yet if hee have such a conceit as this, That hee can help himself, that hee is able to recover and winde himself out of that condition wherein hee is: hee would then stand upon his own bottom, bee a Buckler to himself, and would never come over to *Christ*.

That which kept the Prodigal from his Father, was not the Opinion of any worthiness in himself, hee saw hee was poor and ready to famish; but hee thought hee could recover himself, live of himself, without the help of a Father. And this conceit kept him off.

So the Woman with the Bloody-Issue. It was not her opinion that shee had no need of *Christ*, which kept her off from comming to *Christ*, but shee thought shee was able to purchase help out of her own store, without going to him: And even to the last penny shee conceited shee should have help, when shee had spent all (not before.) Then shee came. And, whilst a man hath a conceit, that hee is able to work out his own Peace, compass his own happiness; Though hee bee poor, yet conceits, hee is able to enrich himself. Though naked, yet hee is able to weave a web of Righteousness, to cloath himself. Though in debt, yet hee is able to make payment. Though undone, yet hee is able to recover himself. I say, so long as a man hath this conceit, thinks hee hath any strength of his own, to winde himself out of the misery, into which hee sees himself to bee plunged: so long hee will never come over to *Christ*. This conceitedness will keep off the Soul from *Christ*.

Men, you know, will rather make use of their own gold, than of others; of their own cloaths than of others; of their own friends, than of others; of their own power, than of others. Men will dig to the Clay, (as *Pliny* saith) before they will go borrow water of their neighbours. Such a spirit there is in man, that hee will sound the bottome, try the utmost what hee can do, before hee will call in for anothers help.

But now, when Faith comes, and discovers us, not only to bee miserable, but unable to extricate our selves out of this misery; not only to bee poor, but unable to enrich our selves; not only under the burden of sin, but unable to cast off this burden; not only indebted, but unable to pay, in prison, but unable to come forth: then will the soul hasten, and come over to *Christ*.

Now this is that which Faith doth. It doth not only empty a man of all opinion of Righteousness in the discovery of his misery, but also it empties a man of all that opinion of strength, to help himself out of this misery. That hee can neither do nor suffer any thing to relieve himself. That all his doings and sufferings are too short to help him.

1 Neither do.
2 Nor suffer.

That the state of nature is not only a state of misery, but a state of impotency, and utter disability to do any thing to help it self. Hence the Apostle saith, *Rom. 5. 6, 8.* -- That wee were not only sinners, but -- without strength; not able to help our selves out of this condition of sin. -- Wee were dead in trespasses and sins. So that wee were unable to do; or (if any thing) yet dead works, such as set us further in debt, but wipe off no score. Hence *Christ* saith -- Without mee ye can do nothing. All our actions are so many Cyphers, so many Nothings.

1. Wee can do nothing to please God: our best works, but *Exagov* *Δίεγον*: The Gift of an Enemy: The Sacrifice of Fools. -- They, that are in the flesh, cannot please God.

2. Wee can do nothing, which is truly, really, and substantially Good. What *Nathaniel* spake doubtfully concerning *Christ*, *Joh. 1. 46.* -- Can there any good thing come out of Nazaret? may pretemporarily bee here affirmed. No good can come out of an evil heart: No good fruit from a bad root. -- Do men gather Grapes of Thorns? or Figs of Thistles? -- Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? It's impossible.

3. Wee can do nothing to settle a sound and substantial Peace in our Consciences: though wee skin them over for a time, calm and still them for a time; yet wee cannot work a sound cure, nor settle a substantial Peace there.

Non ex merito
operis; sed ex
largitate Do-
nantis.

4. Wee can do nothing, which may purchase any blessing or favour from God. Though God reward the works of wicked men sometimes, as hee did *Ahab*, *Jehu*, *Nebuchadnezzar*: yet it is not That the works deserve a reward, but because hee is a plentiful rewarder?

Thus Faith discovers the impotency and utter disability to help our selves. Hence wee are said

1. Not

1. Not to be able to think a good thought.
2. Cor. 3: 3. -- Not that wee are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing, as of our selves. All our sufficiency is of God.
2. " Not to be able to understand, 1 Cor. 2. 14. -- The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishnesses to him: nor can hee know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
3. Not able to will any thing that is good, Phil. 2. 13. -- God worketh the will and the deed of his own good pleasure.
4. " Not able to begin a good work, Phil. 1. 6. -- Being confident of this very thing; that hee that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.
5. " Not able to perfect it, when it is begun to our hands, -- Isa. 26. 12. -- Lord, thou hast wrought all our works in us, or for us. So Rom. 7. 18. -- To will is present with mee, but how to perform that which is good, I finde not.

There is a partial impotency in the hearts of the best; and this is more or less according to the vigor and power of corruption in us. As you see in Rom. 7. 18. For I know, that in mee (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing, for to will is present, but not to perform.

But there is a total universal impotency in unregenerate men -- Every Imagination, motion, figment of his heart being evil, only evil, every day.

But admit wee could do any thing; could make as many prayers, as stars in Heaven; weep as many tears, as the Sea holds drops; Nay could wee do as much as the tallest Angel in Heaven: all this would be too short to winde us out of our misery; that sin casts us into.

2. Wee are not able to suffer, and by our sufferings to help our selves out of this. If wee should macerate and afflict our bodies; suffer all the miseries in the world in way of satisfaction for the least sin: Alas! all would be too little, too short, would not amount and come up to the least debt.

But what do I speak of this? If wee could suffer as many thousand millions of years torments in hell, as the World hath stood minutes from the Creation: Nay, and God should widen the capacities of the Soul, make a man more strong and able to bear more wrath, make a man a larger vessel, to receive more torments, that so, in time, the springs of his Justice may be drawn dry, the treasures of his wrath might be expended, and a full satisfaction be made; yet there would be no time, no eternity of torment, wherein there would be enough endured, as a full satisfaction for the least sin, for the least oath, thou hast ever sworn, for the least idle thought thou hast ever conceived, &c. The reason is, all this is but finite, and therefore cannot come up to satisfy for an offence of infinite demerit.

Thus Faith empties a man, not only of opinion of Righteousness in himself, but of opinion of helping himself by any strength of his own, out of this: Faith will tell thee, *There is an eternal Law revealed, and thou canst not make up that: there is guilt of sin, and thou art not able to satisfy for that; God is an enemy, and thou art unable to make him thy friend: God is angry, and thou art unable to appease him: thou art liable to wrath, and not able to avoid it: thou art under the Curse, and art unable to undergo it: art cast into debt, and art unable to make payment.*

All which being discovered to the soul, the soul falls down at Gods feet, and saith not with him in the Gospel -- *Have patience with mee, and I will pay thee all: But -- Have mercy upon mee, for I am unable to pay. -- God bee merciful to mee a sinner.*

Oh! This will make a soul fall down at the feet of God, and implore that mercy of God, that hee would cancel all the obligations; reverse all his Proceedings, cross all Books; pardon all debts, between him and the soul.

Fourteenth Royalty.

14. Royalty of Faith. Its an Heart-inriching-Grace.

14 Faith is an Heart-inriching, and filling-Grace.

When Faith hath once emptied a man of himself, makes him a fit receptacle: then it fills his soul with *Christ*: when it hath strip'd a man of his own rags, then it puts on the Garments of *Christ*: when it hath made a man poor in himself, it enriches the soul with *Christ*: when wee are nothing in our selves, then *Christ* is made all to us. -- *Wisdom, Justification, Sanctification and Redemption,* 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Cor humile, est vacuum spirituale.

An humble empty heart is the vessel of all Grace. So much Emptiness, so much Grace: Because humility doth empty the heart for God to fill it. If the heart bee emptied once, it must needs bee filled. *Nature abhors emptiness, Grace much more.*

Non datur vacuum.

Faith doth enrich the soul with all the merits of *Christ*, with the *Spirit of Christ*, *Christ imputed*, *Christ imparted*, *Christ infused*: with the *Righteousness of Christ* for *Justification*: with the *Holiness of Christ* for *Sanctification*. Faith will not want it, if *Christ* have it: Faith will not bee poor, if *Christ* bee rich, will not bee empty, if *Christ* bee full. -- *I cannot bee poor (saith Bernard) so long as God is rich: his Riches are mine: Of his fulness I receive Grace for Grace.*

Ego non sum meriti inops, quamdju ille non est inops miserationum. Bernard.

Christ indeed is a *Fountain*, but hee is a *Fountain sealed up*: Hee is a *Treasure*, but hee is a *Treasure lockt up to an unbelieving heart*. Faith is the *Key* that unlocks this *Treasure*, opening the *Treasuries of Heaven*, making an inlet of all the *Glory of Christ*. Faith gives the soul communion with all the *Riches of Christ*. So far as it is possible for *Christ* to bee communicated; hee is made *ours* by Faith;

by

by it there is a conveyance made of all the great revenues of *Christ*. The great stock, which *Christ* did purchase by his Blood, is passed over to the believing soul. There is a *Deed of Gift* made to such; wherein I say, *Not the whole Righteousness of the Mediator; his essential and incommunicable Righteousness: but his whole Mediator Righteousness; that Righteousness which Christ purchased for us as Mediator, the Righteousness of his active and passive obedience; by the one doing our services, by the other bearing our scourges; by the one as was said before, answering Gods commanding Justice, by the other answering Gods condemning Justice: the one in Præmium, to free us from wrath: the other in Pretium, to intitle us to Glory: all this is made ours.*

Non tota Justitia Mediatoris; sed Justitia tota Mediatoris.

As Boaz said to his Kinsman -- *Marry the Woman, and the Field is thine*: So when once by Faith wee are married to *Christ*, his *Aloud* is ours, his merits ours, his Spirit ours: all are ours: Faith gives us a propriety in all. So that Faith may break forth into this rapture with that Father. -- *Lord, I am thy death, thou art my life; I am thy Hell, thou art my Heaven; I am thy sin, thou art my Righteousness; I am thy poverty, thou art my Riches.* And all the Riches which *Christ* did purchase with his Blood (and sit down and think what the Blood of *Christ*, the Blood of God (as the Apostle calls it, by communication of Properties) what this might buy out, at the hands of a Father) why all this is made thine by Faith.

Tu vita mea; ego mors tua.
Tu cælum meum; ego gehenna tua.
Tu Justitia mea; ego peccatum nostrum.
Tu divitias mea; ego paupertas tua.

So that you see, Faith is a Soul-enriching-Grace. It gives a man not only Title, and interest into a Soul-enriching-God, a Soul-enriching-Christ, a Soul-enriching-Treasure: but gives the soul the possession and enjoyment of all this. By Faith wee possess God; enjoy God, and by no other way, but by Faith in *Christ*.

Though Faith be poor in it self, the poorest Grace of all, as having nothing of its own, such a Grace as lives all upon anothers stock, is fed with anothers food, rich by anothers riches, as the Apostle said of himself -- *Hee was poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, yet possessing all things*: so I may say of Faith. Though it be poor in it self, yet it makes us rich, doth enrich us with all the riches of *Christ*, though it hath nothing in it self; yet it possesses all things, it possesseth *Christ*, which is all.

Oh! If you be rich in Faith, you cannot be poor in Grace, poor in Holiness: Faith sanctifies. So much Faith, so much Grace; so much Faith, so much Love: so much Faith, so much Hope; so much Faith, so much Humility, so much brokenness of spirit for sin; so much Patience, Zeal, &c. Never was it known a strong Believer to be a weak Christian. So much Faith write down, so much Grace. Little in Faith, and little in Grace, little in love, &c. Grace is still proportionable to the measure and degrees of Faith, like the fountain and the flood. Hence Faith is called the Mother-Grace, 2. Pet. 1. 2, 3. -- *Grace and Peace be multiplied on you by the Knowledge of God*: ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΓΓΥΝΩΣΕΩΣ: By the acknowledgement;

Quantum credimus, Tantum amamus; Quantum credimus, Tantum speramus. Saith Aug.

ment; that is, by *Faith*. The augmentation of *Faith* doth cause the multiplication of *Grace*; not in the kinds only, but in the degrees. The more *Faith* in degrees, the more *Grace*. Grow in *Faith*, and you grow in all *Grace*. Decrease in *Faith*, and all the *Graces* of *God* decrease in thee. There is decay of *Love*, of *Joy*, of *Patience*. The ground of all decayes, is the decay of *Faith*.

Well then. To draw to a conclusion of this; you see *Faith* is an enriching-*Grace*.

1. It enricheth the understanding with knowledge, with heavenly wisdom, which is better than gold. It makes the Head a store-house of divine knowledge.

There is some Knowledge before *Faith*. *Scientia Principiorum*; the Knowledge of Principles. But the best Knowledge is after Believing. -- Wee beleeve and know, saith *John*. First beleeve, and then know. *Crede, ut intelligas*: beleeve, that thou mayest understand. Hence *David*, *Psal.* 119. -- Teach mee good Judgement, for I have beleeved thy Word. Not that I may beleeve: but -- for I have beleeved.

Non possunt
discere, qui no-
lunt credere.
Addiscendum
oportet crede-
re.

Hence *Augustine*, upon *Heb.* 4. 2. (-- The Word did not profit them, because it was not mixt with *Faith* in them, that heard it) saith, -- They cannot learn, because they will not beleeve. Hee that would learn, must beleeve.

As Knowledge of things revealed goes before *Faith*, so *Faith* goes before the exact understanding, and clear apprehensions of them. How shall a man bee able to understand these heavenly Mysteries in the Word; all which are far above Reason. The Mystery of the *Trinity*, the Mystery of *Christ*, in whom there is nothing but Mysteries.

His Person a Mystery, his Nature, his Works, all Mysteries; 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. -- Without Controversy, great is the Mystery of godliness; God manifested in the flesh; justified in the spirit; seen of Angels; preached unto the Gentiles; believed on in the World; received up into Glory. That hee should bee God-Man, mortall, and immortal: That there should bee such greatness, and such baseness: such infiniteness, and yet such finiteness in one person. These are all Mysteries.

Hence *Christ* is called (*Isa.* 9. 6.) *Wonderful*, because all is wonderfull in *Christ*; hee is wonderful in his Person, in his Nature, in his offices, in the managing of them. A chain of wonders.

So the *Creation* a Mystery, *Resurrection* a Mystery. *Christian Religion* is nothing else but a bundle of holy Mysteries.

Which, how shall any man understand, until first hee beleeve? Hee that seeks to know before hee beleeve, shall never know.

The best way to know, is to shut your eyes, captivate Reason, and Beleeve: and then you shall see and know.

Thus you see, *Faith* enricheth with Spiritual Knowledge.

2. As Faith enriches the Understanding, the Head with Knowledge; so it enriches the Heart with Grace. It makes the Heart a Treasury of divine and holy Graces. The least of which are worth all the Riches of the World.

Divines set down four invaluable things.

1. The Favour of God in Christ.

2. The Souls of Men.

3. The Spirit.

4. The Graces of the Spirit.

1. The Favour of God; That's invaluable; Psal. 63. 3. -- Thy loving kindness is better than Life. And Life is the most precious thing a man hath in the World -- Skin for Skin, and all a man hath will hee give for his life. The Devil was right there. Now Gods loving-kindness is better than Life.

2. The Souls of Men. -- What will it profit a man to gain the whole World, and lose his Soul? Christ sets the gain of the whole World against the losse of one Soul. Hee puts one Soul in one Balance, and the whole World in another. And one Soul weighs down all. -- what will it profit? its too light. All that gain cannot make up this losse. It is an incomparable losse, because an irrecoverable losse; once lost, lost for ever. There's no recovery of a lost soul. Though a man may lose other things, yet may hee recover them again: Man may lose Riches, &c. but not his Soul, when once lost for want of beleeving.

3. The third invaluable, is the Spirit: not to bee bought with silver or gold. Hence Peter told Simon-Magus, when hee would have bought the Spirit. -- Thy money perish with thee. Thinkest thou the Gift of God may bee bought with money?

4. The Graces of the Spirit. The least of which doth weigh down all the World. The least grain of Grace, of Love, of Repentance, of godly sorrow, Humility, is worth ten thousand Worlds. -- Faith is more precious than gold, saith Peter. Now these are the Riches, that Faith doth possess the Soul of, the invaluable Riches of Grace.

Other Riches God deals out promiscuously, and -- No man knows either love or hatred, by any thing before him. A man may do wickedly and prosper, as it was said of Antiochus Epiphanes. These Riches Gods enemies do share in, as well as his friends. Nay, and have often the greatest share, the greatest portion, Job 21. 7. Fer. 12. 1. Dives may have more wealth; Saul more command; Agrippa more gorgious apparel, than the dearest of Gods Saints.

But now these are such Riches as God bestows upon none but Beleevers, -- Abraham gave portions to the Sons of the Concubines, and sent them away: but unto Isaac hee gave all hee had.

Other Riches may bee taken away. A man may bee rich to day, and poor to morrow. -- The Lord hath given; the Lord hath taken away. Both with one breath. Hence the wise man. -- Riches make

Dan. 8. 24. 5.

Rex honores dignis.

Dominus dedit; Dominus abstulit.

make themselves wings, and fly away. But these are abiding Treasure : A Treasure, whose spring is in Heaven; whose Foundation is in *Christ*. -- *Our life is hid with Christ in God* : not only hid for secrecy : but hid for safety. It is a *safe life, an abiding life.*

Nay, but if they should continue : yet will they do us no good in the day of trouble. They cannot save our souls from, nor in the day of wrath. They cannot save us from sickness, nor from death; not from Hell. Nor are they able to mitigate our Torments, to purchase one drop of water in that lake of fire. What profit had *Ahab* of his Vineyard ? *Baltazar* of his cups ? *Dives* of his wealth ? *Judas* of his thirty-pence ? *Aerippa* of his gay apparel ? The rich fool of his full barns ? All these would do them no good. Neither quench, nor bribe these flames, but rather afford Oile to increase them.

But now Grace, that riches, which Faith doth enrich us withall; it is such as will uphold us in sickness, bee a choice cordial in that bitter potion; it will deliver us in death, save us in the day of wrath, and enable us to lift up our heads with joy and boldness in the day of Judgement, that terrible day of the Lord, when the wicked shall tremble before the Judge, and call upon the Mountains to fall upon them, and the Hills to cover them from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

Hast thou other riches, and wantest thou Faith ? Hast thou Mountains of Gold, Rocks of Diamonds, shores of Rubies ? And wantest thou Faith ? wantest thou Grace ? Oh ! thou art a poor man.

Thus you see, *Faith is an Heart-enriching-Grace.* A Beleever hath title to all.

A Beleever is the poorest and the richest man in the World. As none is poorer than a godly man in himself; so none is richer than a Beleever in *Christ*. -- *Hee is as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. Christ is the Heir of all things. All are yours, if you be Christs.* No sooner can the soul say -- *Christ is mine*; but hee may say -- *His Blood is mine, his Spirit mine, his Glory mine; all is mine.*

Christ and all his are conveyed and made over by the same Deed of Gift. Hence the Apostle saith -- *Wee are made partakers of Christ* : Not of some part : but of *Christ*; all *Christ*; not of Justification only, but say *Christ*, and there is all.

Fifteenth Royalty.

15. Royalty.
Faith is an
Heart-raising-
Grace.

15. Faith is an Heart-raising-Grace.

There is a threefold Death, that Faith doth raise up the soul from.

1. The Death of Sin.

2. The

2. The Death of inward Trouble.

3. The Death of outward Trouble.

1. Faith raiseth up the soul from the Death of Sin. Wee are all of us -- Dead (by nature) in trespasses and sins, Ephes. 2. 1. Dead-Born. And as dead men, so wee have no motion to spiritual things, no motion, no strength to any good; no sense, being insensible of the weight of sin, insensible of mercies and judgements; wee have no desires after any thing good, no affection to them.

And a Death it is, not only Privative, A meer absence and privation of spiritual life; but a Positive Death, wherein there is an Introduction of a Positive vitious Habit. As in Natural Death, there is not only a Privation of Life, of the former form: but the Position of another form: there is another form left in the body. So in Spiritual Death, there is not only a meer Absence, a bare Privation of Life: But there is a Positive Evil, and Vitious Habit left in the soul. Hence, Heb. 9. 14. The works of natural men are called Dead works. There would bee a contradiction in calling them Dead works, if unregenerate men were only deprived of spiritual life, and had not another positive evil form in them.

Thus dead wee are then, not only Privatively, but Positively.

And it is Faith which doth raise up the Soul from the Death of Sin, to the Life of Grace. Faith is the Resurrection of the Soul from under the spiritual death, the Death of Sin.

The first rise of the Soul from the Death of Sin, is by believing. An holy life hath its rise from Faith. The Fountain of all our spiritual Graces. The worker of all good things: That which begets Love, Fear, Repentance. Hence Calvin saith, Faith regenerates.

Repentance doth not only follow Faith, but doth arise from Faith. Hence Clemens Alexandrinus. -- Faith is the first awakening, the first inclination of the Soul to Christ.

Hence by some, Faith, and the New Creation: Faith, and Sanctification do differ as much as the Cause and the Effect. -- Faith is the Instrument of Justification: but the efficient of Sanctification.

They, who distinguish Regeneration, which is part of our Vocation, and Sanctification, do make Faith and Sanctification differ as much as Cause, and Effect. Vocation (say they) produceth Faith, and Faith being begotten produceth Sanctification both habitual and final: Hence it's called the Mother-Grace.

But they (who make Vocation and Sanctification all one, and both to bee nothing else but our inherent Righteousness; or those Habits that frame of Grace implanted in the Soul, (whereof Faith is a part) they do say, Faith doth not produce the Cause of the Habits of Graces: but Faith produceth the acts of Grace, of Love, Repentance, &c. Faith

Vita sancta & fide sumit initium.
περὶ ἀπαρχῆς τοῦ χάριτος μίστον.
Chrysost.
ἐργάτης ἀγαθῶν.
Fide regeneramur. Calv.
Resipiscencia non modo fidei subsequitur, sed ex ea nascitur. Calv. ibid.
περὶ τοῦ πρῶτου σπέρματος γενέσεως.
Fides justificationem præcipit, sanctificationem efficit. Tilen.

doth not produce the *Habits*, but the *acts of Grace*.

For the clearing of this. *Sanctification* may bee considered as it is either,

In actu primo,
vel secundo.

1. *Habitual*. Or

2. *Actual*.

1. For our *Habitual Sanctification*, There wee say, the *Spirit of God* is the *only Cause*; and *Faith* is an *Effect* as well as others: *Faith* is a part of our *inherent Sanctification*.

2. For our *Actual Sanctification*, or as those *Habits* do act and exercise; and there wee say, *Faith* doth help to produce the *acts of Grace*, of *Love*, of *Repentance*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. -- *Love* out of a *pure heart*, and a good *Conscience*, and of *Faith* unfeigned. *Faith* doth not only lend an hand to its Fellow-Graces, for the perfecting of *Grace*; but *Faith* doth help to produce the *Acts of Grace*; the *Acts of Love*, of *Repentance*, *Zeal*, *Patience*, &c.

Though at the same time they bee all implanted, yet in *Nature* *Faith* hath the precedency, and helps to produce the *Acts of all the rest*.

As *God the Father* is before the *Son* in *Nature*, yet not in *Time*. Hee is not a *Father* till hee have a *Son*. So is it to bee understood concerning *Faith*, and all other *Graces*.

2. *Faith* raiseth us up from the *Death of inward Troubles*. As the sense of *Gods Love*, the apprehension of his favour is the life of the *Soul*, Psal. 30. 5. -- *In his favour is Life*. So the sense of *Gods Displeasure* is the *Death of the Soul*, Psal. 88. 10. -- *Shall the Dead arise to praise thee?* Hee speaks of that spiritual *Desertion* in which hee was, labouring under the sense of *Gods wrath* and displeasure; which hee calls the *Death of the Soul*. -- *Shall the Dead arise to praise thee?* Shall my *Soul*, dead and sunk with discouragements, and apprehensions of thy wrath, *Shall it arise to praise thee?* So that this is the *Death of the Soul*.

Now, *Faith* doth raise the *Soul* up from this *Death*. When the *Soul* seems to bee sunk and buried under the apprehensions of *Gods displeasure*, is slain with discouragements, lies gasping and breathing for comfort. The least touch of the *Promise by Faith* doth raise up and revive the *Soul*, and fetches a man to life again.

All the while that sense works, a man sinks deeper and deeper into this sad condition. But let sense sit still, and *Faith* come in, and act its part; and the *Soul* cannot lye so low in *Trouble*, but it will raite it up, Psal. 77. 10. -- *I said, this is my Death; yet will I remember the years of the right hand of the most high, &c.*

What a precious thing is *Faith*? It is call'd precious *Faith*. And so it is indeed; that is able to work such wonders in the *Soul*, in an instant.

What a Cordial is this! when a man is in swooning, and fainting-fits, that one taste of the *Promise by Faith*, will fetch him to life again; when the *soul* lies in the dust, under sad apprehensions, heavy

heavy Agonies, sinking and dying; one dram, one grain of Faith, will fetch him to life again, set him on his feet again, walking and leaping, and praising God. This is *precious Faith* indeed.

Now, for the manner how Faith doth work for the raising up of the Soul from under these spiritual Troubles, wee will only adde these particulars.

1. Faith doth in this condition look back upon soul-raising-Experiences. It causes a man to consider the *dayes of old*, the years of ancient time; as David did, in the same condition, Psal. 77. 5.

It makes a man revive those former experiences of Gods Love; those former workings; those fore-past evidences; those broken Rings, Pledges, Love-tokens, which have passed betwixt God, and the Soul.

Such a time hee took mee up into his Chariot, and spake friendly to mee: Such a time, I sat down under his shadow, and his Banner over mee was love: Such a time hee took mee down into his Winecellar, Raied mee with Flaggons: Such a time hee brake into my soul, discovered himself to mee a Reconciled God, gave mee an earnest of his love, a testimony that hee manifested himself to mee, came and supped with mee; gave mee the *White Stone*, the *Hidden Man-na*, the *New Name*, &c.

This is the *Art of Faith*. Thus doth it produce the former evidences and experiences of Love; and from these doth take up arguments to raise the Soul, in this dark condition.

Why will Faith say? Once a Father, and ever a Father. Once a Friend, and never an Enemy. Though wee change, yet God doth not change -- *With him there is no variableness, nor shadow of change*. His carriage may alter, his heart cannot. His expression may vary, his Affections cannot. God hath spoken Peace, and hee will never unsay what hee hath said. Hee hath given mee sure evidences, and hee will never take them away again, though hee may withhold the comfort of them. Hee that hath been gracious, will bee gracious. Men shut their hands, because they have opened them: but because hee hath once opened his hands, hee will never shut them.

2. Faith looks upon Soul-raising-Promises. Such as are not only made for support, but for deliverance. -- I will not contend for ever, nor will I bee alwayes wroth; least the Spirit which I have made should fail before mee, and the Soul which I have created. I was angry with him, I hid my face from him. But I will heal him, I will lead him also, and restore comfort to him, and to his mourners, Isa. 57. 16, 17, 18. For a moment I have forsaken thee, but with everlasting kindness have I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, &c. Isa. 54. 8, 9, 10, 11. -- Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken mee: my God hath forgotten mee! Can a Wo-

man forget her child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? Yea they may: but I will never forget thee. Behold, I have Graven thee upon the Palms of my hands: thy ways are ever in my sight.

These and such like promises Faith looks upon. It doth not so much look at the Face of God; Gods outward carriage and expression in the condition, as at the Heart of God; and his inward affection, which lyes in the Promise.

Full well Faith knows, The Ground of Comfort doth not lye in the Face of God, the aspects of God. If so, then our comforts could not be stable. This alters, as wee alter; changeth, as wee change: But the ground of Faiths comfort lyes in the Promise: and thither it hath recourse, when from Outward appearance it can get no comfort.

Sense looks upon the face of God onely, upon his outward presence: But Faith looks upon the Heart of God in the Promise, where it sees a Calmy heart under a Stormy countenance; inward Smiles, though outward frowns; Inward Affections of Love, under Outward expressions of displeasure.

As Joseph had the affections of a brother, under the expressions of an Enemy. Hee could put on expressions of an enemy; An angry countenance: but yet not put off Affections of a brother; A loving heart: so is it often with God.

And therefore Faith doth view him in The Promise, hath recourse thither, as you see poor David had, in the like case, Psal. 77. to the tenth verse. Hee was in sad Conditions, and nothing could raise him. God absented himself from him: Hee fell to Praying, to Complaining: but yet no comfort came. -- Hee complained and his spirit was overwhelmed. Hee was so farre from Ease by this, that his Spirit was more oppressed. Nay -- Hee cald to remembrance times past. All this while comfort came not in. At last hee betakes himself to the Promise, hath recourse to the Covenant: and then his Soul revived, ver. 10.

Thus Faith looks upon the firmness of the Covenant, the stability of the Promise, and is raised, revived. Read Isa. 49. 14, 15. Isa. 54. from seven to eleven, which are Soul-raising-promises.

3 Faith lays hold upon a soul-raising-Christ. Upon whom who-ever doth lay hold, hee will pull him out of the deepest waters. If a man under water have hold of any thing above him, it will pull him out, hee shall not sink. So here, when wee are overwhelmed in these deep waters; if, by Faith the Soul lay hold on Christ, it will bear him up, and bring him forth, John 12. 46. -- I am come a light into the world (saith Christ) that whosoever belee-eth in mee, should not abide in darknesse. The least touch of Christ by Faith, doth raise up and revive the Soul in this sad Condition.

As the dead man was raised to life, and revived, but by touching the dead bones of Elisha, 2 King. 13. 21. so the Dead Soul, if

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it do but touch the Dead and crucified body of Christ by Faith, is raised up and revived, Such a vertue and influence comes from Christ, as doth raise up and comfort the Soul.

Thus Faith doth raise the heart by laying hold of Christ. He, who raised up himself, will raise up all his members. If our head had been still under water, wee had then perished: but he being risen, will raise us up also being his members.

4 Faith inables a man to put up Soul-raising-prayers, indites Soul-raising-prayers, strong Prayers, and cries to God. As Prayer helps Faith: So Faith helps Prayer. It inables a man to wrestle with God, now in the Dark of desertion, as it did Jacob in the Dark of the Night. Yea, and to wrestle with him, by his own strength, the strength of his Covenant, of his promise, of his Christ.

In which Encounter, Faith will take up arguments,

1 From it self.

2 From God.

1 From it self: By presenting his miserable Condition in the absence of God: That all his own work is ready to sink, and dye, to come to nothing, if hee help not. Oh! (will Faith say) Lord, my flesh fails, my heart fails, my strength fails, my spirit fails. Oh! Come down before I dye: come, strengthen the things that are ready to dye in me.

This argument David took up, Psal. 143. 7. -- How me speedily, O Lord, my spirit fails. Oh! Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the Pit. So Psal. 39. 10, 12, 13. -- Take thy plague from me; I am consumed by the stroke of thy hand, &c. Hear my prayer, O Lord; hearken to my cry. Keep me silence at my tears, for I am a stranger with thee, a sojourner as all my Fathers were -- Oh! spare a little, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be no more.

2 Faith will take up arguments from God.

1 From the justice and truth of God, He hath promised never to leave nor forsake his people.

2 From the immutability of God. -- Thou art JEHOVAH, thou changeest not: therefore the Sons of Jacob are not consumed, Mal. 3. 6. Thou never repentest of thine own work. Thou never hast wooed my heart, to lose it again. Thou never tookest my heart, to leave it again, and take thy heart clean away. Thou never didst set thy heart on mee, to take it off again.

3 From the power of God. Abraham at a plunge was supported with this strong staff of Comfort, when though by Gods command hee was to sacrifice his Sonne Isaac, yet hee accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, Heb. 11. 19. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst, Mat. 8. 2.

4 From the mercy of God. Lord, thou art gracious and merciful; ready to relieve. It's true, I am a sinner, but thou art a Saviour. I am sinful: but thou art mercifull. I am impious; but thou art gracious.

Ego admisi
unde me dam-
nare potes :
Tu non amifi-
sti unde me
salvare soles.

O bone Do-
mine, noli re-
cordare malum
meum, ne ob-
liviscaris bo-
num tuum.

“ous. I have done that, for which thou mightest damn mee: but thou
“hast not lost that, by which thou mayest save mee. True, I am not
“worthy of a smile from Heaven. I have deserved to bee sent from
“darkness here, to everlasting darkness hereafter: from this partial,
“to total and universal darkness. But Lord, proportion not thy
“dealings to mee, according to my deservings from thee. Let not the
“strong God take a pattern from my weakness, good God, do not ever
“remember my evil, lest thou forget thine own goodness, thine own
“mercy. But, thou, who art fount of them, who seek thee not; Oh! Be
“mercifully fount of a soul, who seeketh thee.

Thus will Faith work it self out of trouble; and gather argu-
ments to prevail with God, for deliverance.

It will take up arguments,

From Soul-raising-Attributes.

From Soul-raising-Promises.

From Soul-raising-Relations.

From Soul-raising-Experiences.

It will compass God with Gods own strength. And God cannot, because hee will not deny. God will not reject his own strength, not strive against his own mercy, not resist his own Spirit, not falsifie his own Truth, but will raise up, and revive the Soul.

Thus you see, *Faith is a Soul-raising-Grace*. Where Unbelief holds the soul under water, buries the soul in these sad conditions, Faith raiseth up and reviveth it. A beleeving soul cannot long lye under trouble. If all the *Power, Truth, and Mercy of God* will fetch him out, hee shall bee sure to bee delivered. Faith engages and sets awork all these to help.

Oh! The Reason, my Brethren why you lye so long in spiri-
tual Agonies, buried up in spiritual troubles, is, because you let not
Faith come in to work for you; let Faith have her perfect work, and it
will raise you.

Sixteenth Royalty.

16. Faith is an Heart-cheering-Grace.

16. Royalty.
Faith is an
Heart-cheer-
ing Grace.

Faith is such a Grace as doth cheer and comfort the soul with
unexpressible Consolations: It is such a Grace as makes an inlet
of all the Consolations of God into the Soul.

Faith brings a report to the Soul, that God is his God, Christ is
his Christ: that his Name is written in the Book of Life: his sins are
pardoned: his soul shall bee saved. And such news as this must
needs fill the soul with unexpressible Consolations, with joyes un-
speakable and full of glory.

All other joyes are but mad, and disorderly joyes. They are
carnal, not spiritual; outward, not inward joyes; they are but pain-
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ted, not true Joyes, imaginary, not real Joyes, unsatisfying, not full Joyes, inconstant, not stable Joyes. The best, false Raptures, Anabaptistical Illusions: not true Joyes.

But this Joy. *The Joy of Faith*, it is a grounded joy, it is

1. *A Spiritual Joy*, for the Nature of it.
2. *A Hearty Joy*, for the seat of it; a joy in the heart.
3. *A Satisfying Joy*, for the fulness of it.
4. *A Constant Permanent Joy*, for the duration of it. *My Joy shall no man take from you.*

Alas! what are all other joyes to the *Joy of Faith*? The least morsel of this Joy, is worth all the full meals of worldly delights. The least gleaning of this Joy, is worth the whole Harvest of carnal mirth. The least drop of this, is worth an Ocean of any other. There is more moisture in one drop of this, than in a flood of temporal, and carnal delights.

True Joy grows upon the stock of *Faith*. Where there is no *Faith*, there is no true Joy. *Faith* is the Root, and Joy is the Fruit. It is call'd, *The Joy of Believers*: *Believers* are the Subjects of it; and a Joy in Believing: Believing is the Root of it, *Rom. 5. 1. 2.* -- Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also through Faith we have access into this Grace wherein we stand, rejoicing under the hope of the Glory of God, *Rom. 15. 13.* -- The God of Hope fill you with all Joy and Peace in Believing. Where there's *Faith*, there's Joy.

Ubi Fides,
ibi Lætitia.

If *Faith of Evidence*, there Joy doth naturally result and arise from it: If but *Faith of Adherence*, there Joy is hid and secret, though it doth not appear. The seed of Joy is hid as yet under the Clods of *Faith*, but in time it will break forth and appear. Joy is there though it bee not seen.

There may bee a divorce between *Faith* and actual rejoicing for a time; but there can bee no divorce between *Faith*, and the Matter, and Ground of Rejoicing: not between *Faith* and the Affection of Joy. -- *My Joy shall none take from you.*

Thus you see *Faith* is an Heart-cheering-Grace. It fills the soul with such a Joy, as nothing is able to bereave the soul thereof. It is not Losses, Crosses, Poverty, Sickness, Prisons, Persecutions, which are able to take away this Joy of Faith.

1. *Faith* will inable a man to rejoice in Bonds, to rejoice in Tribulations and Sufferings for Christ, as the Apostle saith. -- *As Sufferings abound, the Consolations shall superabound.* As if all the floods of Consolation did issue from the spring of Sufferings.

2. It will inable a man to rejoice in sickness. *Faith* will bee our best Cordial, and let in such a beam of Gods love into the Soul, as will chear and comfort the heart in this condition: warm and enlighten it: not only enlighten, but warm the heart in this condition.

3. It will inable a man to Rejoice in Poverty, in Calamity, in Famine.

"mine. You see Habakkuks confidence, Hab. 3. 17, 18. -- Although
 "the Figtree do not blossom, nor shall there be fruit in the Vines;
 "though the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the field shall yield
 "no meat: though the sheep be cut off from the Fold, and there be
 "no Bullock in the Stall; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord: I will joy in
 "the God of my Salvation.

Though the waters of Calamity should rise so high as to drown up all his comforts: yet hee could rejoyce in God.

In the absence of all worldly comforts, Faith can let in springs of Consolation from God, to rejoyce the Soul. If God, if Christ, if Glory can rejoyce the heart, Faith will not want matter of Joy in the saddest condition. It is an *Heart-cheering-Grace*. Faith will present to man *Soul-rejoycing-grounds*. There are these five grounds of Rejoycing.

1. *Our Election.*

Hence Christ saith, -- Rejoyce that your Names are written in the *Book of Life*.

2. *Our Redemption.*

3. *Our Justification.*

4. *Our Sanctification.*

5. *The Promises and Hopes of Glorification.*

And Faith presents all these grounds of rejoycing. It makes a discovery to the soul, that wee are Gods chosen, such as hee hath elected; that wee are his Redeemed ones, such as hee hath purchased, that wee are his Justified ones, such as hee hath pardoned: that wee are his holy ones, such as hee hath sanctified: and shall bee hereafter glorified.

And, when such a report is made to the soul, from Heaven, when Faith hath been in Heaven, and brings this news down to the soul, how can it bee but the Soul must rejoyce, and bee filled with all Consolations.

Object. But alas! you will say, *Who are more sad? who are more disconsolate than Beleevers are?* And therefore, how is Faith an *Heart-cheering-Grace*?

Ans. 1. Beleevers may rejoyce, and thou not discern it.

It is a Joy which is not known but by experience. Hence the Apostle saith, -- *It is a Joy that passeth all understanding*. None know it, but they who feel it. -- *A stranger doth not intermeddle with this Joy*. As they cannot feel it, so they cannot see it: and therefore are no Competent Judges, whether Gods people are joyfull, or whether they bee sorrowfull.

2. But to answer further. You say, *Beleevers are sad and disconsolate people*.

1. *All Beleevers are not so*. They are such as are

1. *Under some present cross and affliction*. Gods hand is gone out against them, though for good. -- *For all things work together for good to them that love God, and are chosen according to his purpose*. But I say, some

some present evil is upon them, and this may sadden the spirits of the best for a time, though this may bee their infirmity.

Paul had learned in all estates therein to bee content, and if to bee content, then to rejoyce, unless it were *Contentation by force*, sure not well pleasing to God.

If indeed their comfort did lye in the presence and injoyment of these outward things, then no marvel, if in the absence of them, they were cast down. I say, If the floods of their comfort were maintained by such springs as these, then no marvel, if these being taken away, they bee bereaved of their *Foy*.

But seeing these things are too short either to breed, or feed: either to beget, or fuel a Christians *Foy*: why should the deprival of them so much affect the heart, as to take away their *Foy*?

Have you not still *the ground of Foy*? you have lost *your goods*, but not *your God*. You are deprived of *your Comforts*, not of *your Christ*. And therefore except you do make *Gods of the Creature*, prize them too highly in your Judgement, ingage your hearts and affections too much to them: why should *your Foy* bee taken away?

You see *Paul* had learned in all estates to bee content, and the Prophet *Habakkuk* before mentioned: and why not you?

2. Such they are, as for the present are under *some sad and sore Temptation, combat with Satan*, and for the present their spirits are *sadned*, and cast down.

3. Such as are in *deserted conditions*; God having withdrawn himself, and hid his face from the Soul. Than which there is no *sadder condition* in the World, when not *a Star*; but *the Sun* it self is rent from the Sky; when not *a single Comfort*, but *the universal Comfort* seems to bee *gone*. This may sadden the spirit of Gods people for a time.

All *Jobs* crosses did not so much affect him as this. The loss of his Goods, of his Possession, of his Children came not so neer him, as the apprehension of the loss of his God. Hee could lift up his head under all the other: but here hee was ready to sink.

Such a *Condition* Gods people may bee in, which may cause sadness of spirit, as was *David, Heman, Hezekiah*, and others.

2. So secondly for those of Gods people, that are thus sad and disconsolate; it is not *as they are Believers*, but *as they are Doubters*. Their *Trouble* ariseth from *Doubting*, not from *Believing*. It is not *Faith*, but the *want of Faith*, which is the cause of their *uncomfortable walking*.

If Gods people would live more *out of themselves*, and more in *Christ*: if they would live more the *Life of Faith*, and less the *Life of Sense*: if they would live more in the *Heaven of Promise*, they would not bee so much cast down. *The more trust, the less Trouble*.

Faith would bring *Christ* into the Soul; and there is cheare-
nough with *Christ*.

R

Faith

Faith would bring *Heaven* into the soul, and there is *Comfort* enough in *Heaven*.

Faith would open a way for the *Love of God* to enter, and that would thrust out all other grievances.

But I will not go about to excuse *uncomfortable walking with God*. Why should I give *indulgence to mens Passions*. Gods people are to bee *exceedingly blamed* for their *uncheerful walking with God*.

They are the *shame of a good God*, and give occasion to men to think *hee is an hard and rigid Master*.

They wrong a *good Cause*, and discourage the hearts of others from entering into the wayes of God.

Sure I am, *There is no Condition*, that Gods people can bee in, but they *have alwayes ground, and cause of Rejoycing*.

Either, *A Rebus exhibitis*, from things bestowed,

Or, *A Rebus promissis*, from things promised,

Either, *From things in hand, and possession*,

Or, *From things in hope, and promise*.

And therefore how *blame-worthy* are they, who disquiet themselves with *needless perplexities*? and lay the burden of sorrow on themselves, which God doth not?

Let us examine the *grounds* of these sorrows, and arraign them before the *Bar of right Reason*. What is it that troubles thee?

1. *Is it thy former sins*? why should these trouble thee? God hath *pardoned* them. And wilt thou bring the old guilt upon thy conscience again, which God hath cleared and pardoned? wilt thou binde, when God hath loosed? condemn, when hee hath absolved?

2. *Is it thy present Corruption*? God hath promised to subdue it. -- *Sin shall have no more dominion over you*. Hee hath promised to purge, to purifie: Hee came with *Refinera fire, and Fullers sope*, Mal. 3. 3.

3. *Is it thy Imperfections*? That there is so much formality, so little power? so much coldness, so little heat, &c? why God hath promised to pass by infirmities, to hide and cover imperfections.

4. *Is it, because thou art in some present Afflictions*? why, hee hath promised, that *All things shall work together for good to them that love God*, and are chosen according to his purpose.

5. *Is it, because thou art under some present Temptations*? why St. James saith -- *Count it exceeding joy, great joy, when yee fall in to diverse temptations*.

There is matter of Joy as well as of Sorrow, if by *Faith* thou wouldest but see what God aims at.

1. It may bee, *for trial of Grace*, as in *Abrahams* and *Jobs* case; whose temptation was of purpose to try and justifie his Graces.

2. It may bee, *For exercise of Grace, of Faith, of Patience, &c.*
3. It may bee, *for discovery of sin, nay for destruction of sin.*
4. It may bee, to make us *more humble, as Paul: more prayerful, &c.*

6. Is it because thou art *under some present Desertion?* Yet if by *Faith* thou look upon the firmness of the Promise, the stability of the Covenant; in the absence of sense, thou shalt finde matter of Comfort.

Thus you see *David* did, *Psal. 77. 10.* Hee was in a great Desertion; hee cries and prayes: Hee prayes and cries: Hee renews his former evidences and experiences; yet gets hee no comfort. At last, *By Faith* hee looks upon the truth of Gods Promise, and *the stability of the Covenant.* And then his soul revived, *I remembered the dayes of old, the years of ancient times, I called to minde my songs in the night, I communed with my own heart; my soul made diligent search. Will the Lord absent himself for ever, &c?* And I said, *this is my infirmity. Yet I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High, &c.*

Do but in this sad condition, behold these dealings of God, as the waies of a Father to thee, which are alwaies of Love, of Mercy and Truth, to them that keep his Covenant and his Testament.

Whether Gods end bee for Chastisement, as it was in *David*; Or for Tryal, as it was in *Job*; Or whether it bee for Prevention, as it was in *Paul*; lest hee should bee puffed up; yet all is in love, and therefore cause of rejoycing.

So that there is no condition so sad, but Gods people have still cause of rejoycing in it. Thou canst think of nothing, if thou bee a Beleever, that can minister just cause of trouble to thee. And therefore why art thou so cast down?

If there were *more Trust*, there would bee *less Trouble.* I dare bee bold to say, that *all the troubles, all the disquiets* of Gods people do arise from want of Faith. Were there *more Faith*, there would bee *more Comfort.* And therefore as *David* physicked his soul, when it was cast down and discouraged -- *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within mee? Trust in God:* So let us exercise our Trust, and all our Troubles will vanish, all our disquiets will disappear and bee gone.

Let Faith come in, and discover the Promises of God, made to thee in this thy sad condition.

Hee hath promised it shall not bee too great, *1 Cor. 10. 18.* *There hath no temptation taken you but what is humane: and God is faithful, and will not suffer you to bee tempted above what yee are able; but will with the temptation give an issue, that you may bee able to bear it.* Hee hath promised it shall not bee too long, *Rom. 16. 20. --- The God of Peace shall tread Satan under you feet shortly. -- Hee will not contend for ever.* Hee hath promised to deliver us, when in the day of trouble wee call upon him, *Psal. 50.*

Seventeenth Royalty.

17. Royalty of
Faith. Is an
Heart guiding-
Grace.

17. Faith is an Heart-guiding-Grace.

Faith is the eye of the soul, to direct and guide us. *Faith* is to the soul as the Pole-star to the Mariner, to direct the Mariner which way to steer his course. And the soul is like the Needle in the Compass, which ever looks towards God for direction. It is as it were the Pillar of fire to us, in the Wilderness of this World, to direct our steps to our Heavenly *Canaan*.

Our life is called a *Way*. And not only a *strait Way*, but a *difficult Way*. Wee shall meet with many turnings in this *Way*. And if *Faith* doth not guide us, wee shall either stand still, and not go forward: or wee shall go into *wrong wayes*, the way to *Death*.

My Brethren; wee shall meet with many exigents in our way to Heaven. And, if *Faith* do not guide, wee are sure to go a-miss.

You see what an Exigent *Esther* was put unto: Either to neglect duty, or to endanger her life. Shee put her life in her hand, for the good of the Church of God. If shee had now consulted with flesh and blood, if shee had followed the guidance of Reason, shee had been mis-led.

No doubt but sense and Reason would have told her, that it had been best, not to hazard her self, and put her life in jeopardy: but consulting with *Faith*, and following the guidance thereof, she was resolved to do the duty, though shee perished in the doing thereof: And it was her safety.

The like in *Abraham*. You see what an Exigent hee was put unto. Hee was to part with his Son, his only Son, the Son of his Love, the Son of his old age, a Son of so many Prayers, and so many Promises. No doubt, if hee had consulted with flesh and blood, and carnal reason, they would have bid him to spare his Son: but following the guidance of *Faith*, hee was willing to sacrifice his Son, Heb. 11. 17. -- By *Faith* Abraham, when hee was tryed, offered up his Son Isaac: of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, &c.

So it was *Faith* which guided *Moses* to leave the pomp and glory of *Pharaohs* Court, and to chuse rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 24. If hee had followed the guidance of Reason, or sense, hee had miscarryed. That would have told him, that hee was to regard himself, and his present happiness, and not throw himself out of all. But then hee had been mis-led. But following the guidance of *Faith* hee forfakes all.

This

This *Guidance of Faith* they wanted, *Joh. 12. 42. Who durst not confesse Christ, for fear of being thrown out of the Synagogue.* If they had had *Faith*, it would have guided them to *Jesus Christ*; bee the Issue what it will.

The like of the *Young-man*. Hee went far, but when it was put to him, *to leave all, to follow Christ, to sell all*: it is said -- *Hee went away sorrowful.* Hee consulted with Sense and Reason; hee wanted the *Guidance of Faith*, which would have directed him *to part with all, to cast away all, rather than to leave Christ.*

The like of *Balaam*. Either hee must *forsake the wages of Unrighteousness, or curse the People*: but hee had more desire of mans reward, than hee had *Faith* to expect God, and so hee miscarried.

And, my Brethren, such like straits wee may meet withall in our way to Heaven. And, if wee follow not the *Guidance of Faith*, wee are sure to bee mis-led.

It hath been the ordinary choice that the Saints have been put to, *Either forsake thy God, or forsake thy goods: Either leave Christ, or leave thy Comforts: Either renounce Christ, or lose thy Friends, thy Father, thy Mother, nay, thy liberty, thy life.* To these exigencies and straits Gods people have been driven. And had they not had *Faith*, they had surely been mis-led: but having *Faith*, it guided them to suffer losse of friends, losse of goods, losse of liberty, losse of life it self for *Christ*: as you see up and down, in *Abraham*, in *Moses*, in *Jeremy*, in *Paul*, and the rest of the Apostles; who accounted not their lives dear to them, for *Christ*.

And it was the usual speech of the Primitive Martyrs, when they were perswaded to *leave Christ*, rather than to suffer. -- *Spare good Emperour, thou canst but cast into prison: God into Hell.*

Parce prece
Imperator, tu
Carcerem; ille
Gebennam.

The like of *Cyprian*, of *Policarp*.

The like of *Frederick the Elector of Saxony*, who was prisoner to *Charles the fifth*, and was promised enlargement and restitution to his former dignity; *If hee would come to Mass.* It was *Faith* guided him to return this answer. -- *In earthly things I am ready to yeeld to Cæsar. In heavenly, only to Christ. And Christ is more welcome to mee in Bonds, than Cæsars Court without Christ.*

Thus I might run down in particular examples in all ages, and shew you how *Faith* hath guided men in these straits: which had they followed the direction of Reason and Sense, they had been lost for ever.

It is *Faith* which guides the heart, in these difficult cases. It is an *Heart-guiding-Grace*. And this is the way.

Faith doth reject the wisdom of the flesh, and goes by Gods light. It shuts our eyes, and walks by Gods light. It follows God, as the blinde man follows his Guide, all his dayes. Hee who makes Gods Word all his Reason, shall have God a Counsellor: *Faith* will not own the wisdom of the flesh. -- *the carnal minde is enmity to*

to God. It will not be subject. It is full of contumacy and stoutness against God and his wayes.

Faith will neither own the *Flesh*, as a *King*, nor as a *Counsellor*. As it will not obey the commands of the flesh, so it will not follow the counsels of the flesh.

Peter would not consult with flesh and blood, but was obedient to the heavenly vision: where is implied, if hee had hearkened to flesh and blood, hee had been disobedient to the heavenly vision.

But *Faith* makes God its guide, *Psal.* 48. 14. -- *This God is our God for ever: hee shall be our guide unto death.* *Faith* seeks direction from God, who is the *Counsellor*, the God of all wisdom. And the Soul, that leans upon God for wisdom, shall not want it. He who trusts in the God of wisdom shall not want direction. I say, hee, who shuts his own eyes, and sincerely falls down at the feet of God for counsel, shall have direction from him.

If indeed, wee seek as *Balaam*, with a double heart, or as the Children of *Israel* did, *Fer.* 42. who asked counsel, but were resolved of their way; wee then may miscarry. But hee who seeks with an humble and upright heart, that asks the way to *Sion*, with his face thitherward, resolved to go, as God directs, *Such will God direct in his way: such hee will guide in all the wayes of Judgement.*

As the Moon by darting her beams and influence into the Sea, doth move that great body backward and forward; which they say, is the cause of the ebbings and flowings of the Sea: so God doth in difficult cases, dart such a beam of light into the Soul, such strong influences into the Spirit, as doth carry the soul the way it should go.

A man may follow his own wisdom and miscarry: but hee that shuts his eyes and follows God, is sure not to be misled. Hee, who rejects the counsel of the flesh, and is resolved to walk by the direction of the Spirit, though never so unlikely to flesh and blood, is sure to go right.

You see an example of this in *Balaam*, in *Saul* sparing of *Agag*, and the best of the flock: in sacrificing before *Samuel* came to him. But I'll name but one.

Jer. 41. 10. to the end of the Chapter. *Johan*an, who was the Captain of the Residue of the Jews left in *Jerusalem*, desired *Jeremy* (though with a double and deceitful heart) to enquire of the Lord, whether hee should go down to *Egypt*, or abide at *Jerusalem*: And bound himself with a vow, that -- *Whatever the Lord said, hee would do it.*

Jeremy comes, and tells him, *hee must abide at Jerusalem, and God would preserve him.* But *Johan*an wanted *Faith* to beleeve there was safety, where was no means of safety. And therefore hee chose rather to go down to *Egypt*, than to abide at *Jerusalem*. And if that mans reason might direct it, 'twas the likeliest way: for
in

in Jerusalem was nothing but *Penury, Want, Famine and War*: In Egypt there was *Plenty, Peace, and all abundance*.

But now observe. Though the way were never so likely, yet following his own wisdom, and rejecting the counsel of God: I say, following his own wisdom and counsel, and neglecting the direction of God, hee ran upon his own ruine; it was his utter undoing. You see there, the thing hee thought hee should avoid, hee fell into: Hee thought to have avoided the *Sword, Famine, and Pestilence*: but all these followed him. God would make him know, it was better to follow the guidance of *Faith*, though the way were never so dangerous, unlikely, to carnal wisdom, than to be led by his own wisdom, though 'twere never so likely. Men that would avoid danger out of Gods way, do surely run into it. Hee that will follow his own wisdom, not Gods, shall run into mischief.

You see this in *Jeroboam*. It was a likely project in carnal reason, in mans way, *To continue his Throne and Kingdome, by making of Calves; that so the people might be kept from Jerusalem, and might not revolt back to Judah*. But in Gods way, it was the way to his ruine, the overthrow of him, and all his house.

Eighteenth Royalty.

18. Faith is an Heart-establishing-Grace.

It settles a man upon such a Foundation, as nothing can unsettle him, *Psal. 125. 1. -- They who trust in the Lord shall bee as Mount Sion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever*. Such a man is *Homo quadratus*. Fall hee which way hee will, hee lights upon his square, *Psal. 112. -- His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, his heart is established; hee will not fear*.

Whereas, Unbeleef doth unsettle the soul, fills a man with unsufferable perplexities, sets a man upon the rack of fears. It is that which keeps a man in fears, and that which causeth a fresh return of doubts and fears. -- *If you do not beleeve, yee shall not be established*. An Unbelieving man is an house without a foundation, a man without a bottom, like a ship unballasted in a Tempest, tossed hither and thither.

Faith on the contrary doth make a man a rock in a storm, doth stablish and settle the heart in the greatest Tempest.

The lesse Faith, the more Fear, the more Unsettledness. The more Faith, the lesse Fear, the more Stability.

Faith doth unburden our hearts of all our fears, and all our cares. When a man beleeves not, all the burden lies upon a mans self. But when wee beleeve, wee cast all the burden upon the Lord.

Wee are troubled, and affraid what shall become of our souls, what

18. Royalty.
Faith is an
Heart-esta-
blishing-Grace.

what of our bodies, what of our Children. But *Faith* doth unburden the soul of these cares and thoughts: it doth quit and discharge the soul of these fears. *Faith* casts the whole burden upon the Lord: makes God to bear all the burden: not only the burden of sins, but the burden of cares and fears; comming to him *weary and heavy laden*, and by *Faith* casting our burden upon him, hee bears all, *Pro. 16. 2. -- Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall bee established.* *Psal. 55. 22. -- Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and hee shall sustain thee.*

There are two things *Faith* establishes the soul against,

1. *Against Fears.*

2. *Against Falling.*

1. *Faith* establisheth the heart against *Fears*. When a man beleeves not, hee is nothing but fears and scruples: But, when once *Faith* comes, it doth answer all cases; silences all doubts; stablisheth the heart against all fears.

There are five *Fears* which *Faith* doth establish the heart against,

1. *The Fear of Men.*

2. *The Fear of Want.*

3. *The Fear of Death.*

4. *The Fear of Hell.*

5. *The Fear of Judgement.*

1. *Faith* establisheth the heart against humane *Fears*, the fear of men. *Faith* will banish these unlawful and tyrannical fears. It will not suffer them to enter the Throne, and take possession of the heart, *Psal. 27. 1. 3. -- The Lord is my light and my Salvation.* There was his *Faith* -- *Whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, Of whom then shall I bee affraid? Though an host should incamp against mee, my heart shall not fear: in another Psalm. -- God is our hope and strength, a help in trouble ready to bee found. Therefore will not wee fear, though the Earth bee moved, though the Mountains bee hurled into the midst of the Sea, Psal. 46. 1, 2.*

2. *Faith* doth establish us against the *Fear of Want*. Many there are that fear to out-live their labours, to out-live their Riches, their Comforts. Oh! say they, I shall one day want, and bee in misery.

Now *Faith* settles the soul against these fears. Why, will *Faith* say, hath not God said, -- *The Lions shall hunger and suffer want.* (That is, as the Septuagint read it) *the mighty Nimrods*, the great ones of the World, who have their baggs full: They shall sooner want, than they that fear the Lord, shall want any thing that's good. Why will *Faith* say, -- *Doth God cloathe the Lillies, feed the Ravens, and will hee not take care for thee? Mat. 6. 24. to the 34. -- what? hath not God ingaged himself to bear thy charges to Heaven? Hath hee not promised to give thee all things necessary both for life and godliness? not only for Godliness, for Spirituals: but for Life too, for Temporals?*

Hath

Hath not Godlineſſe the promise of this Life, that now is, and of that, that is to come?

Doth God take care for Ravens, for the Beasts of the field? Doth hee feed his Enemies? and will hee forget his friends? Hath hee given thee a Christ? and doubtst thou hee will give thee a crumb? will hee not give us all things; who hath not withheld himself from us? Thus the Apostle doth reason, Rom. 8. 32. -- Hee that spared not his own Son, but freely gave him for us: how shall hee not with him, freely also give us all things?

Nonne dabit sua, qui non deeratuit se?

Sure hee, who trusts God for his soul, will trust God for his Body. Faith doth not single and chuse out its Object, to beleeve this, not that, but all comming from the same Truth, the same God; it beleeves one as well as another. Hee who depends on God for the many, will depend on him for the less. Hee who trusts God for pounds, will trust him also for pence. -- If I tell you earthly things (saith Christ to Nicodemus) and you beleeve not: how will you beleeve, if I tell you heavenly things? So, if you will not beleeve God for earthly things, how can you beleeve him for heavenly things? If not for sustentation: how then for salvation?

Fides non eligit Objectum.

3. Faith doth stablish the heart against the Fear of Death, the King of Fears, as Job calls it: And of all terribles, the most terrible, as the Philosopher speaks. Unbeleef doth slay the heart with fears. A man, that knows not what shall become of his soul to all eternity: no marvel if hee bee afraid to dye.

When a man shall lye upon his death bed, and knows not whither hee shall go. *Quo vadam nescio.* As it was said of Aristotle. I go I know not whither: Or, when a man shall look upon death, and Hell behinde it: upon the Pale Horse, and Hell behind, as wee have it, Rev. 6. no marvel if hee bee afraid to dye.

But when by Faith wee can look upon God a Father: Christ a Saviour, and can say, -- God is my God, Christ is my Christ, Heaven is my Inheritance, Glory is my portion: no marvel then, if death bee not terrible, no marvel then if hee bee ready to meet death, and say with Simcon -- Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace. Or with Paul, sigh out, *Cupio dissolvi*: I desire to bee dissolved, and to bee with Christ.

Men that have not assurance of a better life, it is no wonder if they bee loath to leave this: they know not where to mend themselves. *Earth in Possession, is better than Heaven in Reversion.*

But when God hath given a man the assurance of a better life, when a man hath his hope in his hand, his evidences sealed, Oh! then death is not terrible: There will bee a willing Resignation of the soul into Gods hands.

It's true, in some case, Hee that beleeves maketh not haste, but here, the more wee beleeve, the more haste wee make to bee with God.

4. Faith Stablisheth the heart against the Fear of Hell. Faith knows

knows who was in *pretium*, as well as in *premium*, and beholds *Christ* not only in *Premium*, to intitle us to Heaven; but in *pretium*, as the price of our Redemption, to free us from *Hel.* As by his Active Obedience hee answered Gods commanding and remunerative Justice: So by his Passive Obedience hee answered Gods condemning and vindictive Justice, freeing us from that wrath and misery, which otherwise wee should unavoidably have fallen into.

3. *Faith doth establish the heart against the Fear of Judgement.* There shall bee no condemnation to such as are in *Christ Jesus*, such as are *Believers*. The Judge is our Advocate, our Saviour; Hee, to whom wee are to answer, hath answered for us: Hee, to whom wee are to give satisfaction, hath satisfied for us: Hee is our Redeemer, who hath laid down his life for us. *Faith* knows *Christ* will bee *All*, in *All* to the soul, not only in life to preserve it, but in death to comfort, and in Judgement to absolve thee, and save thee.

2. *Faith doth establish the heart against falling,*

1. *Against Total Apostacy.*

2. *Against Final Apostacy.*

1. *Against Total.* There is not a *Total Apostacy*. Though the Saints fall sadly, yet not *Totally*.

2. A Child of God may lose all the comforts of spiritual life: yet not spiritual life it self. Hee may bring himself into such a sad condition by sin, that hee may sin away all the comforts of this life. Thus *David*, *Psalm 51.* *Restore to mee the joy of thy Salvation.* Hee had not lost life, but the comforts of it, and desires they may bee restored. A man may out-live the comforts of life: this is a sad thing to out-live comforts here, but *Faith*, at least, layeth the grounds of those comforts that are endless.

2. A man may lose all the Vigorous and Powerful Operations of Grace, and Life: yet not life it self. It may bee with a Child of God, as with a man in a dead Swoon; though there bee life in him, yet the operations of life are but little discerned. It's not with him, as it was wont to bee. Hee thinks to go out (as sometimes *Sampson*) in prayer, &c. but his strength is gone from him, as his was. But his life is hid with *Christ* in God, as the Apostle hath it, *Col. 3. 3.*

3. A man may lose some measures and degrees of spiritual life: yet not life it self. Hee may suffer a great decay in his *Faith*, a great abatement in his Love, and Zeal, &c. and yet life is not lost. Thus it was with the Church of *Ephesus*, *Revi. 2. 5.* *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first Works.* -- Wee are not to think that the Church was fallen from Grace: but only from some measures and degrees of Grace. And concerning the same Church, *Revi. 2. 4.* when it is said, -- *Shee had lost her first love*: it is not meant, that shee had lost the Grace of *Charity*: you see the fruits of it in the second and third verses:

But

But shee had lost the degrees. It was not extinguished, but cooled only. The word is [*Ἀφύατος*.] which signifies, not that shee did altogether [*Amittere*] lose it: but somewhat [*Remittere*] remit and abate of the fervency of it. As one saith of Peter. -- *The strength of spiritual life was moved in him, but not removed; shaken 'twas, but not shaken off. Hee remitted the Grace of Faith, intermitted the act of Faith, but lost not the Habit.*

Mortua fuit in eo spiritualis vitæ robur; non amittit, non excussum. Gratiam fidelis remittit, Actum intermitit; Habitum non amittit.

Isa. 6. 13. -- *Hee shall bee like an Oak, whose substance is in him, when it casts its leaves: so the Holy seed shall bee the substance thereof.* Like to that, is that of *1 Joh. 3. 9.* -- *Whosoever is born of God sinneth not; for his seed remaineth in him: neither can hee sin; because hee is born of God.* It may bee with him, as 'twas with Nebuchadnezzar. The Tree may bee hewn down, but the stump is bound with a bond of Iron.

2. Faith establisheth the heart against final Apostacy. Though they fall foulely, yet not finally. They have the Prayer and Intercession of Christ; the Power of Christ; the Merit of Christ; the Promise of Christ. Faith produceth all these.

Wee are said to bee established by Faith; to live by Faith, to stand by Faith; to bee preserved by Faith as with a guard, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* -- *Wee are kept by the Power of God, through Faith unto salvation.* By Faith wee are said to subdue the flesh; to have victory over the World; to quench the fiery darts of Satan; to bee saved by Faith, &c.

Indeed all ages give reports to us of many, who have been eminent in Profession, and yet have come to nought. Some fallen from Grace to basenesse; some fallen from Grace to bitternesse; some from Grace to vitiousness, some from Grace to maliciousness: But these were never true Beleevers. A Star fallen is not a Star. -- *They went out from us, because they were not of us: for had they been of us, they would have continued with us, 1 Joh. 2. 19.* It is the evil heart of Unbelief that causeth them to depart from the living God, *Heb. 3. 12.*

Stella cadens non est Stella.

Where there is true Faith, there is stability. Faith doth establish the heart from falling.

1. Faith sets a man upon a Soul-establishing-bottom, upon a sure Foundation, upon Christ: and hee is sure who is built there: as the house on the Rock; so the soul on Christ is safe. Time was, a man was his own Foundation, but it was a landy one: but now his Foundation is Christ, a Rock of ages.

2. Faith doth interest a man in a Soul-establishing-Covenant: not a Covenant of Works, but of Grace, *Jer. 32. 40.* -- *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will never turn from them to do them good: But I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from mee, Isa. 54. 9, 10.* -- *This is as the Waters of Noah unto mee, for as I have sworn, that the Waters of Noah shall no more go over the Earth: so have I sworn that I will not bee angry with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

Sine mutatione
stabiliter fixa.
So Aug. ren-
ders it, and
hence the faith
on that place.
Nec quæ ista
miravit obz-
cat, nec quæ
ædificavit de-
struit, nec quæ
plantavit avel-
lit.

3. *Faith doth beget in a man Soul-establiſhing-Principles: The Principles of Grace and Holineſs: The Graces of God, which are (Αἰεταμένοντα) Without Repentance: i. e. God doth never behave himself to those upon whom hee hath bestowed these Graces, as though hee repented of the bestowing of them. Whom hee hath in-lightened, hee doth not blinde; whom hee builds, hee doth not destroy; and whom hee plants, hee doth not pull up.*

And *Faith* hath a great influence into this, to preserve and establiſh the heart from falling. It is said, -- *Wee are kept by the Power of God, through Faith to Salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5.*

1. *Faith doth ingraft us, and unite us to Christ, makes us Members of Christ, the Spouse of Christ, and Christ will not lose either his Spouse, or the least of his Members.*

2. *Faith doth keep out the grand Enemy to this, standing thus steadfastly, and that's Hypocrisie. If a mans heart bee unsound, let his shew and appearance be what it will bee, all will come to nought, as in Herod, Judas, &c. If an Apple bee corrupt and rotten at heart, though the rind, and outside bee never so lovely and specious, 'twill not long last: the corrupt inside will mar the fine outside in the end.*

An Hypocrite is but an *Apostata* cased, and an *Apostata* is but an *Hypocrite* uncased.

3. *Faith establiſhes the heart against fears of men; the frowns and menaces of men.*

4. *Faith will keep the heart constant to duty, to the use of the Ordinances, which are strong means to hold up the soul in Gods way.*

5. *Faith makes a man jealous and watchful over his own heart, of Declinings either in Action, or in Affection. It will not suffer a man to give way to the least coldness in love, lukewarmness in zeal, remissness in duty. If any steal upon his heart, hee is never quiet till hee have recovered his former heart.*

6. *Faith doth maintain in the heart an holy fear of falling; which is a great means to preserve from falling, Jer. 32. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from mee: Such a Fear it keeps as may curb and keep under the flesh: but not discourage and weaken the Spirit. An industrious fear, not a discouraging fear: a faithful fear, not a despairing fear. A fear joyned with Faith, and a Faith mingled with fear. A man may bee fearful, and faithful. Fearful in himself; faithful in Christ: weak in himself, strong in Christ.*

There are four fears which *Faith* casts out,

1. *A servile, and legal Fear.*

2. *A distrustful Fear.*

3. *A despairing and discouraging Fear.*

4. *A careless Fear.*

As security is fearless, so sometimes Fear is careless, if it bee excessive.

There

There are also four Fears which Faith retains.

1. *An awful Fear.* Such a Fear as restrains from adventuring on occasions of sinning. It is as bad Divinity to grant the occasion, and deny the sin, as it is Logick, to grant the Premises, and deny the conclusion.

The *Nazarite* was forbidden Wine; and withal that hee must not taste the Kernel of the Grape, least that might bee an occasion to draw on the other. Wee have a sad example in *Monicha*, *Angustines* Mother. Shee looked on the Wine in the Cup; from looking, shee fell to liking; from liking, to tasting; from tasting, to sipping; from that to drinking, and so to Excesse. Sins in Divinity are like absurdities in Philosophy. One absurdity granted, multitudes follow.

Uno absurdo
dato multa se-
quuntur.

2. Such a Fear as makes us to go out of our selves, and lean and rely wholly on *Christ*. A Fear of our selves, of our own strength, &c.

Alas! What are wee to *Adam*? to *David*? to *Solomon*? to *Hezekiah*? *Peter*? men of sweet and familiar acquaintance with God. Yet see what Testimonies of mens frailties they left behind them. And all this to teach us to maintain an holy Fear and jealousy over our own selves; that wee might go out of our selves, and lean all upon *Christ*, without whom wee cannot bee sure.

3. *An industrious Fear.* Such a Fear as puts us upon all holy duties, and means for our establishment to preserve us, God promised to adde fifteen yeats to *Hezekiahs* life; yet hee was to preserve this life, and uphold it, with food and dyet, and other necessities for life: so God promised wee shall not fall: yet wee must bee conscionable in the use of all good means, whereby wee may stand; otherwise wee tempt God: and just it is with God to let us fall, if wee neglect Prayer, and the rest of his Ordinances appointed by him for our perseverance.

4. *A jealous Fear over our own hearts.* They are deceitful, and wee had need to bee jealous over them, and watch. Think not thy self so far at distance from any sin, but thou mayest fall in to it, if God keep thee not.

Who could bee further from Drunkenness than *Noah*? who was the only sober man, in the drunken old World. Who from Incest than *Lot*? the only chaste man in *Sodom*. Who from Murder, than *David*? whose heart smote him for but cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment. Who from denying of *Christ*, than was *Peter*? who had rather dye with him, than forsake him. And therefore wee had need to bee jealous, and watch over our own hearts.

There is no place so good, but wee may offend in it. As the Angels in Heaven, *Adam* in Paradise. There is no company so good, but wee may sin in it. As did *Sarah* in the Angels company, *Judas* in *Christ*s.

Thus let us maintain these holy Fears in our hearts, and by

by that bee kept from falling.

Use of Examination.

Let this then put us upon the *Trial*, whether or no wee have *Faith*.

You see the *Necessity of Faith* in respect,

Of Justification.

Of Sanctification.

Of Salvation.

I have shewed you, it was the great thing, which God required to *Justification* and *Salvation* of a sinner. And you have seen the Excellency of this Grace laid down in many *Glorious Priviledges and Royalties*. You have seen that God hath poured more honour upon the head of *Faith*, than upon any other Grace. Let all this perswade with us, to put our selves upon the search and *trial*, *whether we have Faith or no*.

Put such a question as this to thy own soul. *Am I a Believer, yea or no? Have I Faith, yea or no?*

It was a duty which the Apostle did commend to the *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. -- *Examine your selves, whether yee bee in the Faith; prove your own selves*. And it is that, which, after this long discourse of *Faith* I would commend to you all. *That you would put your selves to the Trial. Examine whether you have Faith or no*. Therefore hath God given us a faculty different from all Creatures, whereby wee may reflect upon our selves. Many there are, who will winnow others, but not sift themselves: spel others, but not read themselves: searching others rather than themselves. But let it bee your care every one to prove and examine himself.

The encouragement to this duty I will take from these two grounds.

1. *It is a thing possible to bee known, whether you are Believers, yea or no.*

2. *It is a thing necessary to bee known.*

1. *It is a thing possible to bee known.* Hence have wee so many exhortations, to examine and search. If it were *not possible to bee known*, in vain were these exhortations. God doth not use to put us upon *Impossibilities*. Though God in the Law may require that of a natural man, which is impossible for him to do, Rom. 8. 3. because hee gave man once ability to do whatever is commanded; yet in the Gospel *Christ* doth require nothing of the faithful, which by Grace is not possible to bee done. Possible then it is. There is light enough in the Word; if a man will bring his heart unto it; and deal impartially with himself, in the search, whether hee hath *Faith* or no.

The Papists indeed do say: It is a thing *impossible to know, whether*

ther hee bee a Beleever or no. If men did know they did beleeve, then they might be assured of their own Salvation. But thus (say they) no man can bee assured of.

A Position clean against Scripture, Authority, and Reason.

The Scripture is plain; the Precepts of the Scripture plain, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Gal. 6. 4. -- Let every man prove his own work. -- Let every man examine himself.

They who are commanded to try, may upon Tryal, know whether they have Faith or no.

But every man is commanded to try. God in the Gospel doth not put us upon Impossibilities.

Besides, the examples of Scripture are plain. The Eunuch a new Convert, when Philip told him, hee might bee baptized, if hee did beleeve, answered. -- I beleeve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Act. 8. 37.

The like of the Father of the possessed Child, when, having but a weak Faith, yet could say, -- Lord, I do beleeve, Mar. 9. 23. So Joh. 6. 69. -- Wee beleeve and know, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Joh. 11. 26, 27. -- Beleevest thou this? saith our Saviour to Martha there. Shee answers. -- Yea Lord, I beleeve thou art that Christ that should come into the World.

Hence saith Augustine -- The Beleever seeth his own Faith, whereby hee doth beleeve. Again. -- as soon as Faith is in us, wee see it in us.

The mind is not ignorant of its own actions. When it understands, it knows it self to understand. When it discourseth, it knows it self to discourse. When it desires, it knows it self to desire.

To take away this act of the soul, whereby a man reflecting upon himself and his own actions, is able to know and judge of them: were to destroy the Prerogative royal of an intellectual nature.

Now if the naked spirit of a man bee able to judge of his own actions here: how much more the spirit of a man being helped by the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2. 12.

If Faith it self bee a witness (as Hee that beleeveeth hath the Witness in himself, 1 John 5. 10.) How much more when the Witness of Gods Spirit joynes with us: when the Spirit witnesseth, what place is left for doubting?

If Faith it self bee a Light. How much more, when Gods Light comes in with ours: The Light of the Spirit, to the Light of our Spirit.

Besides, How shall a man receive the comfort of his own Faith, (as Hezekiah did, Isa. 38. 3. and Paul, 2 Cor. 1. 12.) if it bee not possible for a man to evidence to himself, that hee doth beleeve.

Is it possible for a man to know his vicious actions, to his humiliation: and not possible to know his vertuous actions, to his con-

Vide fidelis
ipsum fidem
suam.
Ipsum fidem
quando inest in
nobis, videmus
in nobis.
Mentis nostrae
fides nostra
conspicua.

Quando Spiritus
testatur,
quamquam relin-
quatur ambi-
guitas?
Fides est lu-
men seipsum
visibilem faci-
ens.

consolation? If it bee granted of the one, why should it bee denyed of the other.

Indeed, I will grant thus much; though it bee possible, yet it is exceeding difficult.

1. In respect of the deceits.

2. In respect of the doubts and mis-givings of our own hearts.

1. In regard of the deceits of a mans own spirit. -- *The heart is deceitful above measure, who can know it? Jer. 17. 9. And -- take heed lest the Light within you, Or, That Light you think to bee within you, prove darkness.*

They that are much vers'd with their own hearts, do finde an Hell of deceit in them. Mens hearts are like some pictures: If you look on one side, there's an Angel, but on the other, a Devil.

There are depths of deceit in the hearts of men, which makes the work exceeding difficult. -- *Every way of man is good in his own eyes. -- There is a Generation of men (saith Agur) who are pure in their own eyes; and yet are not washed from their filthiness.*

Such deceits there are in the heart, that if a man will take all of trust, which comes up, hee will surely bee deceived.

You see this in the Children of Israel, Deut. 5. 27, 28. They said -- *Whatever the Lord said unto them, they would do it.* It is like, they spake as they meant, at that time. But hee that searched the heart saw deeper into them, than themselves into themselves. Hee espied deceits to lye low, which they were not perhaps aware of. And therefore saith -- *Oh! That there were such a heart in them, that they might keep my Commandements alway.* Hee saw, they wanted yet the Heart. This was but self-deceiving.

I might instance also in Hazael, when the Prophet told him what beastly cruelty hee should exercise toward the Children of Israel. -- *What!* (saith hee) *Is thy servant a Dog, that hee should do such belluine and beastly cruelty?* It may bee, hee spake what was uppermost: hee spake as hee meant for the time: hee was not aware, nor did hee discern the deceit of his heart: hee thought his heart to bee far from that now, which afterward hee fell in to.

The like of the Israelites, Jer. 42. throughout. So that you see, it is a matter of some difficulty. And therefore the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Bids us not only examine, but prove. Not only to examine, and take the first evidence the heart gives in, but to prove whether the evidence given in, bee true. It may bee you have examined your selves, by the rules of the Word. Your heart hath given in an evidence for you. Why, but prove, if this evidence bee true: see an evidence of that evidence.

As in Solomons Temple, there was Light set against Light: so here you must set Light against Light. As for example. Inquiry is made, whether I have Faith or no. Answer is given in upon the

the scrutiny; That I have *Faith*. It is well. But now prove this. Why how? Set Light against Light. See an evidence of that evidence. The Word saith -- *Faith purifies the heart*, Act. 15. 9. *Faith sanctifies the heart.* *Faith works by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

Now then. Is thy heart cleansed from filthiness? Art thou sanctified, &c.

The like in another. Inquiry is made, whether a man love God, yea or no. It may bee the heart gives up this answer, that hee doth love God. Why, but now prove it: -- *Hee that loves God, keeps his Commandments*, Joh. 14. 15. *Hee that loves God will obey him; will not displease him.* *Hee who loves God will not sin.*

And so in any other. Thus you see, though it bee possible; yet it's a matter of difficulty, in regard of the deceits of our hearts. And therefore wee are to take the more pains.

2. It is difficult in regard of the doubts and mis-givings of our hearts. And this at all times, if Gods Spirit come not to witnes with our spirits; our own spirits will bee born down with doubts and mis-givings of our unbelieving hearts; and wee shall never know what our condition is.

Hence wee have these phrases, *Rom. 8. 16. The Spirit doth witness with our spirits, that wee are the Children of God.* It's not the witness of our own spirit, that will answer all the doubts and objections of our hearts. If Gods Spirit strike not in tooke and bearing witness with us.

The like wee have, *1 Job. 5. 6, 7, 8.* And other places; I especially that of *1 Cor. 2.* from 9. to the 13. verse, where you shall see, that it is a work of Gods own Spirit, to settle the soul in the assurance of his good condition.

And, as at all times, so especially at three times. It is exceedingly difficult.

1. In times of Humiliation.
2. In times of Temptation.
3. In times of Desertion.

1. In times of Humiliation. As some call evil good; so thou calls good evil. Now, As some take the shadow for the substance; so thou the substance for the shadow. As some depend on false grounds; so thou denyest the true. As some feed, and cherish matter of false comfort; so thou feedest on matter of discouragement. Some heat themselves by a painted fire, *Isa. 50. 11.* and thou quencheest the sparks of Gods own kindling, if the Spirit of God break not in at that time.

In times of Temptation, when Satan assaults a man, tells him, that all his Graces are false and counterfeit; that hee is an Hypocrite. And presents an Army of confutations, at once, in an instant, and so manages them, that whatever evidences a man can think of to the contrary, they are either taken away; or seem-

T ingly

ingly confuted, as fast as they are thought on.

In this case a man may bee ignorant of his Faith and Graces. At such a time, if a man inquire, either the spirit of a man will bee silent, and return no answer; Or, if it do return any, it is a disturbed one. If a man reflect back at such a time as this, hee shall finde nothing, but of Satans party to return him an answer.

3. *In time of Desertion*; when it may bee, our Evidences bee hid in the dark; the soul is in a mist, and cannot read its own Faith. The Glass can give no reflex, except the Sun give light: Nor a mans Graces appear to comfort him; except God shine upon them. As the *Moon* and *Stars*, so our Graces do shine with a *borrowed Light*. And unlesse God do shine secretly into our hearts, irradiate, and give light unto our Graces: though they bee *in esse*, in being in the heart: yet not *in cognosci*, in the apprehension they will not appear at all to comfort us.

In these cases, the work is *Difficult*. But what then! *Things must not bee left for Difficulties*; because they bee beset with *Difficulties*. *Difficulties* must not put us off from *Tryal*, but put us on to *try more thoroughly*. Hee who faith, *there is a Lion in the way*, is not fit for *Heaven*. They that feared the Giants were not fit for *Canaan*. It is a sign of a *base and degenerate spirit* to *desist* in the pursuit of a good way, because of *Difficulties*. Though it bee *difficult*, yet it is *possible*. A thing it is that hath been attained in all ages of the World. Others of Gods people have *known*, and so mayest thou.

2. It is not only *possible*, but *necessary* that you should know whether you bee *Believers* or no. It is *Necessary*,

1. *In respect of your Comforts.*

2. *In respect of your more lively Obedience.*

1. *Its necessary in respect of your Comforts.* What comfort can a soul have in this, *That Christ is a Saviour*, if hee know not, hee is *his Saviour*? And how shall hee know this, except hee know that hee doth believe? -- hee is the *Saviour of them that believe, only*.

What comfort is it to know *there's pardon of sins*, if wee do not know that our sins bee *pardoned*? And how shall wee know this, except wee do know that wee believe. -- They only that believe, have their sins *pardoned*.

What comfort can wee have in the *Merits, Death, and Blood of Christ*? what comfort, in the *Promises of the Gospel*, till wee know wee are *Believers*? such to whom *Christ* and the *Promises* belong?

If a man did but once clear this. How might hee run down all the *Promises*, and fetch in comfort from them all? why, (might the soul say) *Christ is mine: his Blood is mine: his Spirit is mine: his Merits are mine: his Righteousness is mine: to justify mee: His Holiness is mine, to sanctifie mee: His Mercy is mine, to save mee. All is mine, if I bee a Believer.*

Oh!

Oh! Thou dost not know what wrong thou dost to thy soul, in neglecting to clear and evidence this to thy self.

Why, you will *live without Comfort*: you will *dye without Comfort*.

My Brethren. If you would not *live without Comfort*, if you would not *dye without Comfort*, labour to evidence this to your souls, *that you are Believers*.

Oh! It would adde much to your Joy and Comfort to *know this*. Many there are who live without comfort, who lye upon the rack of fears and discouragements, are in unsufferable troubles all their dayes.

Many, who for want of clearing this to their souls, *that they are Believers*, go with a spark in stead of a flame.

And as you live: so you will *dye without Comfort*, if you do not take care to evidence this to your souls.

And this were a sad condition. Whatever a man hath in this life, yet when hee comes to dye, hee would willingly have all the *Comfort possible*. Though a man may bee content to go *Quarter-sail* and *Quarter-wind*, here in this life: yet when hee comes to dye, hee would willingly go *Full-sail* to Heaven.

Lesse *Comfort* may serve a man to live by, than to dye by: because, whiles a man lives, other things come in, to make up the want of *Comfort*: every thing casts in something, to make the soul a stock of *Comfort*. But if this will not do, if a man cannot piece up his *Comforts* with other things: yet, whiles a man lives, there's hope and expectation still of more *Comfort*.

But, when a man comes to dye, that hope is gone: There's no hope then of ever getting more. And this is a sad condition.

And, My Brethren, It is a thing which God doth often deny at death: because wee have been no more solicitous to clear our Evidences in our life. I say, God doth now withhold the *Comfort of Faith*, because wee have neglected to clear out Evidence of *Faith*, which is a sad condition. Though the condition of the soul bee never the less safe: yet the condition is less comfortable to our souls.

2. It's necessary in respect of our more lively obedience. The knowledge of this, will make us lay out our selves for God. It will make us industrious and active, in all holy Obedience. It will make us burn out, not smother out: wear out, not rust out. It will make a man a Volunteer in Gods work: to sweat and take pains in the Vineyard of the Lord.

It's false what the Popish Doctors say. That the knowledge of our good condition should slack the hand, make a man supine and remiss in holy Obedience. As much as it will make a Traveller slack his pace, because hee knoweth hee is in his way, and that by making speed in it, hee shall come to the end of his journey.

Oh then! Is it a thing possible to be attained? Is it necessary? why then are wee so injurious to our selves, to rob our selves of

that Comfort, which the Knowledge of our *Faith* would contribute to our souls afterward.

Do you delight to know all things else? and bee ignorant of your selves? will you prove all things else? and not your selves? you will prove your Gold; you will prove your Silver; you will prove your Evidences, and will you not prove your selves? There's nothing of worth that a man will take upon trust, without tryal.

Do you delight to bee kept upon the rack of fears, and perplexities of spirit? do you delight to hang between Heaven and Hell? As *Absalom* between Earth and Heaven? and not know what shall become of your eternal souls to all eternity?

Why, if you do not thus, then take some pains in the search and examination of your selves. -- Prove your selves whether you are in the *Faith* or no?

Thus having premised this, upon which I have on purpose insisted the more largely, in respect of the *Necessity of this duty of Self-Examination*, wee will now come to lay down some Rules, whereby wee may discover to them, who are willing to take pains in the search of their own hearts, whether they have *Faith*, or no.

In the laying down of which, that I may not erre, I shall desire to go by these two Rules.

The first Rule is, the Word of God. The Book shall try you. That Book that shall save or damn you at the last day, shall try you now whether you have *Faith* or no.

And I hope, if the Word convince you, that you have not *Faith*, you will subscribe to the conviction. If the Word say it, I hope you will conclude it. But, whether you will or no, That which the Word saith is true. That conviction which the Word doth fasten upon you, shall lye upon you at the great day, if now you get it not off.

The Second Rule I shall desire to go by, is this, to lay down such Evidences as are universal; and belong to all Believers; weak, as well as strong, the least degree of saving *Faith*, as well as the highest measure of it. I shall desire so to comfort the strong; as not to discourage the weak: so to satisfy the strong, as I may also establish the weak. For

I conceive, There's a great Error committed in the laying down of Evidences, to take an Evidence from the highest degree of *Faith*.

As when wee should lay down an Evidence of *Faith*, wee take our Evidence from Assurance. This is a great Error. By this means wee shall cast out many thousands, who are true Believers, and yet want Assurance.

And yet my care shall bee, as not to quench the smoking flax; so not to cherish a false flame: as not to discourage the meanest;

so not to encourage the strongest, if false: as not to discountenance a true, so not to countenance a false. But that the false may have no Comfort, the true no discouragement.

Now the Method, that I will observe, to evince this to your souls, whether you have Faith or no, shall bee some Evidences taken,

1. From the usual manner of Gods working of this Grace of Faith, in the hearts of Unbelieving men.

2. From the Grace it self wrought in the soul.

1. From the manner of Gods working this Grace, which is this.

1. God doth use to discover sin to the soul, Awakens a mans conscience, makes a man to see his sin, and his misery by reason of sin, that hee lies under the wrath of God by reason of sin, and that there's an utter impossibility in him, to winde or free himself out of this condition.

This is the first work. Men will not believe, nor come over to Christ, till they first bee humbled, till they see and feel the want of Christ.

This you see in the Prodigal: in the Woman with the Bloody Issue. It was Misery brought them home. Men must bee cut off their own stock, before they can bee ingrafted upon another: Thrown off their own bottom, before they can cast themselves on Christ, the true Foundation.

The Terms of Mercy are too hard, the Take of Christ is too strait for such men, who were never humbled. What! To damp themselves! cut off their right hand! to forsake their beloved sin! But Mercy upon any Terms to the humbled is desirable. No! Reason can bee so bitter for the Recovery of a dying man: No hard hold too sharp for a drowning man, to take hold of. So no Terms too hard for an humbled sinner.

Whereas, before a man bee humbled, the Proposition of Mercy and Pardon is but all lost labour. Hee makes Light of Mercy, Light of Christ, Light of a Pardon, as they did, that were invited to the Supper. It's said -- They made Lights of it.

Men will not seek after the Physician, before they feel themselves to bee sick: for ease, till they bee prest with burdens: for a Plaster, before they bee wounded: for heavenly Riches, before sense of their spiritual beggary: for enlargement, and pardon, before they bee in Prison: for Mercy, before they smart under the sense of Misery: Nor for a Christ, till the soul do finde a necessity in the want of Christ.

Hence the Law is said to bee our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And it is upon this ground, among others, because it doth discover sin to us, and lash us, and humble us for it. And then wee are ready to go from Sinai to Sin: from the Law of Moses accusing, to the Gospel of Christ excusing: from the Law condemning, to the Gospel absolving.

2. God

2. God doth discover to the soul the fulness and al-sufficiency of Christ. -- Who is able to save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him; and Heb. 7. 25. That there's enough in him to justify and save so vile a sinner, as thou hast been. Christ his Righteousness is an everlasting Righteousness; such as an eternity of sinning is never able to expend and draw dry.

As our Faith can never out-grow the Righteousness of Christ, so neither can our sins, Rom. 1. 17. It is said to bee [*A Righteousness revealed from Faith to Faith.*] The more Faith, not the less, but the more Righteousness is revealed. The broader the Eye of Faith, the wider the Righteousness beheld.

As all the Faith in the World could never over-clasp the Righteousness of Christ: So all the sins in the World are not able to nullify, or pose it.

As it cannot bee over-lookt, or comprehended, by any Faith: So it cannot bee exhausted by any sins.

Both of these wee have set down, Job. 16. 8, 9, 10. -- I will send the Spirit, and hee shall convince the world of sin. There is Humiliation. -- Of Righteousness. That is, that there is *A complete and Al-sufficient Righteousness in mee.* That I am able to save to the utmost, to pardon sin.

This God discovers. Faith must have a bottom to rest on: An Al-sufficient Saviour. No man will throw his soul away.

3. With the fulness, God discovers the freeness of this Righteousness to all comers: How willing God is to bestow Christ on you, and how willing Christ is to bestow himself upon you.

Hence wee have such invitations -- *Ho! Every one that thirsteth, come yee to the Waters,* Isa. 55. 1. -- And -- *Let him that is athirst, come,* Rev. 22. 17. And -- *Come to mee, all yee that are weary and heavy laden,* Matth. 11. 28. And -- *Him, that comes to mee, I will by no means cast out,* John. 6. 37.

4. God stirs up the soul to pursue Christ, with enlarged desires, and earnest prayers; kindles desires in the soul after him -- Oh! That God would bestow Christ on mee! I see I am in misery. I see I am a sinner. Oh! That thou wouldst bestow Jesus Christ upon my poor soul! As the poor pursued *Hardsath pant* after the Brooks of water: So panteth such a soul after the Lord Jesus. Now Christ upon any termes is desireable.

5. Now God works the Grace of Faith in the soul, whereby the soul doth draw nigh to Christ, and throws it self into the arms of Christ, embraceth him with all his might; casts it self wholly on him for Life, and Salvation.

Have you not seen how a tender Infant, in the apprehension of danger, runs into the arms of the Parent for succour? so doth the soul pursued by the Law, and affrighted by the apprehensions of Gods wrath, flye into the bosome and armes of Christ for succour; bespeaking him with all the termes of Love, and Confidence.

dence. -- My Lord, My God, My Hope, My Fortress, My Strength, My Redeemer, save mee, else I perish. Hide mee in the clefts of this Rock. Pity mee. Succour mee. Thou who art a Saviour, Lord save mee. Thou, that art Mercy, shew mee Mercy.

And here now begins the Life of a Christian, though as yet hee feel little motion. Strong is hee now in desiring, though feeble in performing. Resolved hee is, by any means to stick to Christ; yet not sensible of any union with him. Hee admires the brightness of the Beams of his Mercy shining in the Gospel; but feels little warmth of joy and comfort in his heart. Hee hungers after the Word, but feels little nourishment. Here is the beginning of true Faith.

Now then, would you know whether you have Faith? try your selves. Have you found, that God hath thus wrought in you? what? hast thou been thus humbled in the sight and sense of sin? deeply affected with the fulness and freeness of the Grace of God in Christ, so as to raise up in thee those earnest longings and pantings after him, so as thus to cast and venture thy soul upon him, this useth to hee the manner and way of Gods working Faith in us; by which wee may come to know whether this Faith bee wrought in us, or no.

2. Some Evidences are taken from the Grace it self. In which, because Faith doth admit of degrees, some having stronger Faith, some weaker, Though all of us have (as it is in 2 Pet: 1. 1.) -- The like precious Faith, the same Faith for kind: yet all have not the same Faith for degrees. In some it is strong, in some it is weak; Sincere in all. All men are not of like age: all Trees not of the like growth. Wee read of a little Faith. -- Oh yee of little Faith! Faith, though little. Wee read of a great Faith. -- Oh Woman! great is thy Faith. All Beleevers are not of the like stature in Christ. Some are but Babes, and some are grown men; there's a little Faith comparatively: and there's a great Faith. Therefore lest I should unsure the weak in satisfying the strong, I will here give you

1. Some Evidences of a weak Faith.

2. Some Evidences of a Strong Faith.

1. The Evidences of true Faith, though weak.

1. The weakest Faith hath strong desires to close with Christ in the Terms of the Gospel: Is willing to take Christ in the whole latitude and extent of Christ: not only totum Christum: but totum Christum: Christ in all his Offices: not only as a Priest, but as a King; to whom the soul is as willing to yeeld Subjection, as to have Salvation from him, as desirous to submit to his services; as to enjoy his Priviledges, to do duty, as to partake of his bounty; to throw it self at the feet of Christ, with strong desires, though (it may bee for the present) but with weak assurance of Mercy from him.

Quest. But who dath not thus desire Christ? who is not willing to accept of Christ?

Ans.

Ans. It is impossible that any Unbelieving man should desire *Christ*, in the latitude and extent of *Christ*. Hee may desire him for Salvation, but not for Sanctification: as a Priest, but not as a King, to rule and govern him; to bring every thought into subjection to himself: for happiness, but not for holiness. Such a one cares but to have a pardon from him: but not purging: Glory, but not Grace. Such a one can say with *David* thus far -- *Hide thy face from my sins*. But -- *Create in mee a clean heart*, There hee leaves him. Hee desires the end of a Christian, but not his beginnings.

Extrema Christianorum desiderat, non exordia.

2. The desires of a wicked man, of an Unbelieving man after *Christ*, they are transient, not permanent desires: which may bee in times of trouble, in a storm; cares not if hee have him as a shelter, under some rack of conscience, when hee lies on his sick-bed. But these continue not. No sooner the storm is blown over, but the desire is gone. Or in a passion, when hee is in a good mood, as *Balaam* desired to dye the death of the Righteous: so hee, after a Sermon, &c.

3. The desires of an Unbelieving man are faint, not strong and earnest desires: They are but slight and superficial desires, such as are put off with every thing. They are not vehement and strong desires, such as will not bee put off with any thing; but with the thing desired; like the desires of *David* after the Wells of *Bethlehem*. -- *Oh! That some would give mee to drink of the Waters of Bethlehem, &c.* Like the desires of *Christ*, *Luk. 22. 15.* -- *With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.* That is -- with strong desires: not a single, but a double Desire: a desiring Desire.

Such may have some slight and superficial Desires, but they are put off with every thing. As the Mother puts a toy into the Childs hand, and the desire to the breast is gone: So here, The Devil hee puts a matter of profit, or pleasure into their hands, and then all their desire is lost.

True Desire is strong Desire, that will not bee satisfied, but with the thing desired: as *Rachel* for Children: -- *Give mee Children, or else I dye*: so here. -- *Give mee Christ, or else I dye*. The soul is ready to faint and mis-carry, with the longings it hath after *Christ*.

4. They are idle, not industrious Desires. The Desires of the sluggard, who will not put his hand to the use of the means for obtaining of his Desire: who will not Hear, Read, Pray, &c.

Where on the contrary, a vehement intention after *Christ*, is joyned with a vehement intention after the use of means for the getting of *Christ*. True Desires after *Christ*, are ever joyned with the best endeavours for *Christ*. Hee, who desires with an honest heart, will labour with an industrious spirit.

2. Weak Faith, though it cannot close with the Promise, yet will it

close with the Precept. Though not with the Privileges of a Christian, yet with the services of a Christian. Though it cannot share in the Comforts, yet it will side with the Duties of a Christian. Though it cannot clear it, whether God hath given Christ to him; yet it will yeeld up the soul to him. Though it know not whether hee will receive it when it commeth, yet it will come. Though with Mary, it cannot say; -- My Saviour, yet, with Thomas, it will say, -- My Lord. It wants strength to throw it self into the arms of Christ, to save it. Oh! but yet it will cast it self at the feet of Christ to serve him. Though it want the Light of Comfort and Consolation, yet it will walk in the Light of command and Direction.

There's not one duty through the latitude and extent of a Christians walking, but the soul desires and indeavours to walk in it.

3 Weak Faith is joined with mourning and sorrow for the weakness of it. What it wants in Apprehension, it makes up in Humiliation; There is want of Sense, but not of Sighs; like the man in the Gospel. It's said -- Hee spake with tears; Lord, I belevee, Help my unbelief. Lord, I cannot lay hold on thee: Oh! That thou wouldest lay hold on mee! I cannot apprehend thee: do thou apprehend mee! Fold mee up in the arms of that mercy, that never unfolds: close mee up in the armes of that love, that shall never unfold.

An humble wanter, is better than a proud enjoyer. An humble craver, than a proud haver.

4. Weak Faith is an unfeigned Faith, 1 Tim. i. 5. Not a Counterfeit, and Hypocritical Faith: Such an one as never comes to God for Love: but in a Storm for shelter, Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. -- When hee slew them, then they sought him, and inquired early after God. They remembered God was their strength, and the most High God their Redeemer. -- But they flattered him with their mouth, and assembled with him, with their Tongue: for their heart was not upright with him, nor were they stedfast in his Covenant. But such a one as comes to him out of Love, desires nothing more than to enjoy him: to enjoy Him, rather than His.

5. Weak Faith is an holy Faith; Jude vers. 20. Build up one another in your holy Faith, &c. Such a Faith as is accompanied,

1. With Holiness of Heart.

2. With Holiness in Life.

1. With Holiness of the Heart. The soul is univerally sanctified. There's a Treasury of Grace. There are all Graces, though as yet in weakness. So much Faith as there is: so much Love, so much Hope, so much sorrow for sin. They are like the Fountain, and the Flood, whereof the one ariseth no higher than the other. Thus where there is Faith, there is Sanctification. Though Sanctification be no Ingredient to Justification: yet Faith and Sanctification, Faith and the new Creature never went asunder. There is a new

Quantum credimus, Tantum amamus, Tantum speramus.

Judgement of things: a new Will to things: New Desires and Affections: New Principles: New Purposes: New Practices.-- Old things are past away: behold, All things are become new.

2. *With Holiness in Life.* Though it cannot bring forth strong fruits of Holiness: yet it will bring forth fruits according to its strength. A little Tree, a young Tree may bring forth some good fruits, though not in equal quantity to another of greater growth. So hee that hath the meannest Faith, hee lives an holy Life, brings forth some good fruits; though not so plentiful in good works, as they, whose Faith is come to a more perfect growth.

6. *Weak Faith doth not rest in weaknesse:* but labours after strength. *Weak Faith is a growing Faith.* Though it begins in weakness, yet it grows to strength, which growth is a character of all true Grace. And therefore doth it thirst after the Ordinances, as a new born Babe, that it may grow thereby. As the Word was the Breeder of it: so it thirsteth after it to bee the Feeder. As it was the Begetter of it: (for true Faith is the Daughter of the Ministry-- Faith comes by hearing, Rom. 10.) so it thirsts after it for nourishment.

7. *Weak Faith will cleave to Christ:* will not forgo nor forsake Christ for any thing. What it wants in Apprehension, it hath in Adhesion: what it wants in Evidence, it hath in Adherence.

Ask any, who are weakest in Faith: whether they would sell their part in Christ for a World: whether they would deny Christ to gain a World? and they will quickly answer it, with an earnest Negative, as Naboth did Ahab when hee would have bought of him his Vineyard, 1 King 21. 2, 3.

Whereas a temporizing Faith doth hold to Christ for want of a temptation, as the Weather-cock, that stands this way for want of another wind: A true Faith, though weak, will hold to Christ, out of Love, nothing shall take it away, in the midst of all temptations. It is of the Nature of true Faith, though never so weak, to adhere and cleave to Christ, Rom. 3. 8.-- *Thou hast but a little strength: yet thou hast kept my Word, and hast not denyed my name.*

A little Strength, a little Faith will hold to Christ, will not give up Christ. I say not, but Gods people may fall, and in some respect forsake Christ, as Peter did. But this may arise from the violence of temptation, the strength of corruption, which overpowers Faith. It is (as said) of the Nature of Faith, to cleave to Christ.

Well then (to conclude with a word to them that are weak) you that can clear this to your own hearts, that *You have Faith, though it bee weak: Bee not yet discouraged: bee not troubled though it bee weak.* Consider

1. *That the smallest degree of Faith is true, is saving Faith,* as well as the greatest. A sparkle of fire is as true fire as any is in the Element of fire. A drop of water is as true water as any is in the Ocean.

Ocean. So the least grain of *Faith* is as true *Faith*, and as saving, as the greatest *Faith* in the World.

2. *Though it bee weak: yet it is a growing Faith.* As all the works: so all the Graces of God begin in weakness. The tallest Cedar was at first but a sprig. The strongest Oak at first was an Acorn. The greatest fire at first was a spark: so the greatest measure of *Faith* at the first was but as a little seed. It had a beginning.

Thole things God intended not for growth, hee made perfect at first; as the Sun, the Moon, &c. But those hee intended for growth, hee at first makes imperfect; as Men, Beasts, Plants, &c.

Christ compares *Faith* to a grain of Mustard-seed. Not to a stone, but to a seed. Stones are not capable of growth, but seeds are. Hee compares it to a Mustard-seed: which, though it bee the least of seeds, yet grows up highest. And such a seed is thy *Faith*. Though it bee small, though weak; bee not discouraged; the Mustard-seed will grow.

3. *The weakest Faith doth give the Soul Union with the strong Redeemer; as well as the strongest.* The smallest measure of *Faith*, if never so little, if it bring but the soul over to *Christ*, it ingrafts thee into him, as well as the stronger; makes thee a Member of this Body; a Branch in this Vine.

4. *The weakest measure of Faith gives thee Communion with Christ, as well as the strongest.*

Wee know the least bud draws sap from the Root as well as the greatest bough: so the weakest measure of *Faith*, doth as truly ingraft thee into *Christ*; and by that draw life from *Christ*, as well as the strongest. The weakest *Faith* hath communion with the Merits and Blood of *Christ*, as well as the strongest: hath communion with the Spirit of *Christ*, the Graces of *Christ*, as well as the strongest.

Though thou art weak, *Christ* is strong. His strength is thine, as well as the strongest. Thou art impure, *Christ* is pure. His Purity is thine as well as others. Thou art ignorant, *Christ* is wise. His wisdom is thine. Thus the soul hath a communion with *Christ*, in all his Graces.

The least *Faith* marries the soul to *Christ*. And where there is this union, there is a communion also with all of *Christ*.

The least *Faith* ingrafts into *Christ*; and being once ingrafted; the soul draws sappe and spiritual life, sense and motion from *Christ*.

5. *The weakest Faith hath as equal share in Gods Love as the strongest.* Wee are beloved in *Christ*. And the least measure of *Faith* makes us members of *Christ*. The least *Faith* hath equal right to the Promises, as the strongest. And therefore let not our souls bee troubled; discouraged for weakness.

There is difference betwixt Want, and Weakness; canst thou clear this to thy soul, That thou hast *Faith*, though it bee a weak *Faith*? Yet therein rejoyce and bee comforted.

The least *Faith* sets as wide a difference between thee and unbelievers,

believers, as is between Heaven and Hell. And therefore study to bee thankful for the least degree of *Faith*; if it bee true *Faith*. Do not so much look, as to over-look. So look for more, as to over-look what thou hast received. Neglect not that Comfort your present *Faith* affords, by reaching after more.

Now having thus laid down the *Evidences of a weak Faith*, wee shall now proceed to lay down the *Evidences of a strong Faith*. Now where there is a *strong Faith*, there is

1. *An high prizing of Christ* (which yet a weak *Faith* partakes of,) 1 Pet. 2. 7. -- *Unto you that beleeve, hee is precious.* The soul doth rate and value *Christ* above all the Comforts and contentments, Riches, and Happiness in Heaven, and Earth. Thus you see *David*, Psal. 73. -- *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none in the Earth that I esteem in comparison of thee.* Though hee esteemed of other things, yet *Christ* was the first figure. The estimate which his soul set on *Christ*, did infinitely exceed the rate which hee set upon any thing besides *Christ*. As *Paul* said -- *They were all but drosse and dung, in comparison with Christ.* The most excellent things were lols and vile in respect of *Christ*.

There are two things which make *Christ* precious to a man.

1. *The Knowledge of Christ.*
2. *The Apprehension of our Interest in him.*
1. *The Knowledge of Christ, and that*
1. *Of the Want of Christ.*
2. *Of the Worth of Christ.*

1. *The Want of Christ.* When the soul apprehends the Necessity of *Christ*, in respect of Pardon, Purging, Grace, Glory. When the soul sees hee is under the guilt of sin, and stands in need of *Christ* for Justification: Hee is under the filth of sin, and stands in need of *Christ* for Sanctification. Hee is under the power of sin, and stands in need of *Christ*, for the subduing and mortification of sin. His person and performances are unclean and filthy, and stands in need of *Christ*, to wash and sprinkle him: This makes *Christ* precious; sets a rate upon *Christ*.

2. *The Knowledge of the Worth of Christ.* It is not the worth of things, that makes things precious to us: but our Knowledge of the worth of them.

What is it that doth commend the Jewel to the Lapidary: but his knowledge of the worth of it. By others, that know it not, it is not valued nor esteemed. So, that which doth commend *Christ*, the worth and preciousness of *Christ* to the soul, it is this, our Knowledge of the Worth of *Christ*. By others, who know him not, hee is a disallowed stone, not worth the owning, 1 Pet. 2. 8.

2. The second thing which doth commend *Christ* to a soul, is *The Apprehension of the souls Interest in him.* When the soul can look upon *Christ*, as his own, then hee esteems him; when hee knows hee hath a Propriety in *Christ*, a part in *Christ*.

Now

Now a *strang Beleeuer*, hee

1. *Knows the Want of Christ.* Hee sees hee cannot *live without Christ*. The more *Faith*, the more *apprehension* and *sense* of our wants.

2. *Knows and sees the worth of Christ.* Hee sees those excellencies and beauties in him, which to others lye hid, and are not discovered. To others hee is an *Orient Pearl in an heap of Sand: a Mine of Gold covered over with rubbish and earth.* They are not able to behold his beauties.

2. Hee sees and apprehends his own interest in him. And this makes the soul to prize him. Hee can say, *Christ is mine. His Righteousness mine, to justifie mee: His Holiness mine, to Sanctifie mee: His Sufferings mine, to save mee.* And upon this there ariseth an high prizing of *Christ*.

Quest. But you will say. *Doth not every man prize Christ? who doth not value and esteeme of Christ?*

Ans. You may say, you do so. But there's no such matter. If *Christ* were precious in thy eyes, then

1. Thou wouldst not care what pains thou tookest for the compassing of *Christ*. You see a worldly man, to whom the World is precious, what pains hee takes for the attaining of the things of the World, *Eccles.* 4. 8. the like and greater pains wouldst thou take for the things of *Christ*, if hee were to thee a-like precious.

2. Thou wouldst not care what thou partest withall for the compassing of *Christ*. Thou wouldst count *Christ* thy greatest gain, and all los in comparison of him, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. Hee is not valued at all, if hee bee not valued above all.

3. Were *Christ* precious to thee, thou wouldst never think thy self to have enough of *Christ*. *Drink, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved! Cant.* 5. the more the soul tastes and drinks, the more it thirsts, *till it drink it new in the Kingdome of Heaven.*

Thus, where *Christ* is precious, there would bee actions suitable to that rate and esteeme, the soul sets on him.

Now, when you will take no pains for the getting of *Christ*, when you will part with nothing for the keeping of *Christ*, when you will not heap up in most abundance whatever *Christ* is to others, write upon it, to you it is not precious.

4. Where *Christ* is precious indeed, all of *Christ* is precious. Hee is not only precious in his Person, in his Natures, in his Benefits: but all of *Christ* is precious.

Christ in his Holiness, *Christ* in his Lawes, *Christ* in his Government, *Christ* in his Truth. The soul looks upon all these as prizes of *Christ*. Hee who prizeth of *Christ*, doth prize of all these.

As wee say of *Faith*, It doth not *eligere Objectum*, it doth not chuse its Object, single out what it will beleeve, and what it will not

not beleeve; but beleeves all, that God saith: So I may say of this prizing of *Christ*. True prizing of *Christ* doth not single out its Object. Thus much of *Christ* I will prize, and thus much not: But there is a full prizing of all *Christ*. *Christ* in his Holiness, Lawes, Government, Truth, All.

All which are parts of *Christ*, and are all to bee prized, if ever you would clear this, that you prize of *Christ* truly.

And without question, Gods people have seen so much Beauty in the Laws, Government and Holiness of *Christ*, that they have lost all, rather than they would lose their Obedience. And it was said of *Christ*. *Vitam perdidit, ne Obedientiam perderet*: Hee lost his Life, rather than hee would lose his Obedience: so may it bee said of them, They have taken up naked Obedience with the losse of all. They have seen so much beauty in a Truth, that they have hazarded and lost all, rather than they would lose a Truth. They have made this brave adventure, *to lose themselves, to save a Truth*, as you see in Queen *Maries* dayes, in point of Transubstantiation.

In these particulars a weak *Faith* shareth stakes with a strong: But for what is more peculiar to a strong *Faith*.

1. Strong in *Faith*, and strong in *Grace*. According to the proportion of *Faith*, such is the measure of all Gods Graces in us. As weak in *Faith*, weak in *Grace*. So strong in *Faith*, strong in *Grace*. So much *Faith*, so much *Love*, so much *Hope*, so much *Patience*, so much *Humility*. Wee will single out some.

1. Strong in *Faith*, and strong in *Affection* and *Love* to *Christ*.

There are two things which make the soul to love *Christ*.

1. The discovery of the Beauties, and excellencies of *Christ*.
2. The Apprehension the soul hath in the interest it hath in this *Christ*.

Now both these are in a strong *Faith*.

1. There is a full discovery of the Beauties and Excellencies of *Christ*. The Beauties of his Person, the Beauties of his Nature, &c. And that in a larger measure, than is made known to a weak Beleever.

A weak *Faith* sees the Excellencies of *Christ* in puncto: in a narrow room: as wee see the World in a Map: But a strong *Faith* it sees all the Excellencies of *Christ*, in circumferentiâ: Hee sees a larger, and fuller draught, hath a fuller discovery of it to his soul.

And who can see it, but hee must needs love him, who is all lovely, who hath all Beauties?

That Eye of *Faith*, which beholds the Beauties and Excellencies of *Christ*, will bee a Burning-Glass to the heart, to set the heart on fire, and kindle strong affections there.

2. There is (in a strong *Faith*) a strong apprehension of the souls

souls interest in *Christ*. That *Christ* is his, and hee is *Christ*. His Blood and Merits his, for Pardon, for Justification: His Grace and Holinesse his, for Sanctification: His Willdome his, for Direction: And therefore the soul must needs love him.

Propriety wee see in things makes us love them. Wee love our own Husbands, our own Wives, our own Children. The ground is this; the propriety wee have in them.

So when the soul once sees *Christ* made over to him, that hee hath a propriety in him, an interest in him, needs must the soul love him.

So you see then, where there is a strong Faith, there is a strong Affection to *Christ*, strong Love to *Christ*: Such a love as no duty is too hard to undertake for *Christ*, no task too great to pose his love to *Christ*.

It was said of *Isabel*, that hee indured many years servitude for *Rachel*: yet hee thought the time short, all was nothing, because hee loved her. So all wee can do for *Christ*, all will be nothing, if wee once love him.

Nay, not only all wee can do, but all wee can suffer will be nothing to the soul that loves him. Love is as strong as Death. You see it in the Apostles. They counted not their lives too dear to give for the Love of *Christ*.

It is not the Blood which is in the veins, the spirits, which are in the arteries, the Life, in the Body, which will be too dear.

There is a kinde of unquenchablenesse in Love, like the stone in *Theriac*, which burns in the Water. Much Water cannot quench Love.

1. Much Afflictions from God cannot quench our Affections to God. As all our dealings to God doth not alter Gods affections to us: so all Gods dealings to us, will not alter our affections to God. *Si diligis, Domine, fac quicquid vis*, was the speech of Calvin: Lord, if thou love mee, do what thou wilt. And *Jehoiada*: Though thou kill mee, yet I will still trust in thee. And the Church professeth the like, *Psal.* 44. 17, 18, 19. All this is come upon us, yet do wee not forget thee, nor have wee dealt falsely in thy Covenant: Our heart is not turned back, nor have our steps gone out of thy paths: Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death, yet.

2. Much afflictions for God shall not cool our affections to God. Wee shall bee ready to go through a Sea, through a Wilderness, through the sharpest encounters for *Christ*. Nothing shall pose a strong Believer.

When once the soul is perswaded of the Love of God by Faith, then there follows abundance of love to God again, 1 *John* 4. from 15. to 19. whosoever confesseth that *Jesus* is the Son of God, in him dwelleth God, and hee in God. And wee have known and believed the Love that God hath to us: God is Love; and he that dwelleth

lesh in love; dwelleth in God; and God in him, &c. wee love him, because hee loved us first. And that of Mary. -- Much was forgiven her; and therefore shee loved much.

Amor Dei a-
morem animæ
parit.

Whiles a man looks upon God as an enemy, who hates him; hee can never love him. But, when once the soul by Faith doth apprehend Gods love to him; then doth the soul love God again. The love of God begets love in the soul to God. No mans heart is warmed with the sense of Gods love, but it is inflamed with love to God again.

As the Sun beams shining upon a Glasse, begets a reflection of the Beams upon the Wall: So the Love of God shed abroad in our hearts, breeds a reflection of love back again to God.

2. Strong in Faith; and strong in Hope, and expectations of the thing beleaved: which is that which holds up our head, and keeps the soul from sinking, in the midst of all these worldly troubles.

3. Strong Faith, and strong Patience. A strong Faith will bear strong Afflictions, with strong Patience. Faith doth strengthen a mans shoulders to bear evils and troubles with Patience.

A weak Tree is blown down with that which moves not a stronger Tree. Weak shoulders sink under that burden, which a strong one will bear away. So a weak Faith would sink with that tryal, which a strong Faith is able to undergo, with strength of Patience. And therefore it is Gods goodnesse still to proportion the Tryal to the strength.

A strong Faith can receive a mercy and bee thankful; and can render a mercy, and bee patient.

A strong Faith can enjoy a blessing; and bee chearful; and can lose it, and bee contented.

Hence saith Paul. I have learned in all estates; therewith to bee content. I know how to abound, and how to suffer want, &c. Hee was a man strong in Faith.

And the ground of all is this, because a strong Faith having clear evidence and apprehensions that God is a Father, doth conclude that all his dealings are for good. -- All things shall work together for good, to them that love God. And hee hath said, -- Hee will never depart from us, from doing us good.

Faith, like the Philosophers Stone, turns all into Gold; sees all Gods dealings to bee for good.

If God then afflict a man, why, will Faith say, Its for good. I have need of such Afflictions, to work out such a strong corruption.

Are the Afflictions many? why, will Faith say, I have need of many Afflictions, because I have many corruptions.

Are they long? why, I have need of that too: because sin and I are so hardly parted. It is so hard to make a divorce betwixt sin and my soul; and therefore the afflictions had need to continue long.

Faith

Faith sees that God aims at this, to *wean us from the World*, to win us closer to him, to exercise and increase our Graces, to weaken sin and corruption, to make us more fruitful. Therefore doth hee prune us, that wee might grow more. If a man lop Trees at sometimes, they will wither and dye: but if at other times, they will be made more fruitful. God useth to afflict the wicked at such time. But the Saints, when they may grow the more. Therefore God winnows us, fannes us, to blow away the chaff: Therefore hee puts us as Gold into the fire, that wee may come out much more pure.

Strong *Faith*, and strong *Obedience*. *Obedience* is proportionable to our *Faith*. The greater the *Faith*, the more the *Obedience*. A little Tree, a young Tree may bring forth good fruit, as well as a greater: but not in equal quantity to the greater: so hee that hath the least degree of true *Faith*, lives a godly life, brings forth some fruits of *Obedience*: but they are not so plentiful in good works, as those, whose *Faith* is come to an higher degree.

Weak *Faith* doth obey; and this *Obedience* is a willing, a cheerful, a fruitful, a constant, an universal *Obedience*, both,

1. In respect of the Subject, The whole Man, and
2. In respect of the Object, The whole Law.

There is a willing yeelding of the soul up to God, to walk in every way of God. As David, Lord, I am thine; or as the Prophet *Isaiah*. -- One shall say, I am the Lords. Otherwise it were not true *Obedience*.

But they are not able to act so much as the stronger. They are as large in desires, in affections to obey: but not in expressions of *Obedience*.

But the stronger the *Faith*, the stronger is the *Obedience*, the stronger the Will, the stronger the Affections, and the spirit in his *Obedience*.

A Child may do actions as well as a Man, but not with that strength, as a man doth them: hee cannot do them so strongly, so vigorously.

A weak Beleever may pray, hear, &c. but not pray so strongly, so powerfully; as others, who have more *Faith*.

So that you see, where there is strong *Faith*, there is strong *Obedience*. A strong *Faith* will follow God fully in every way. In losing waies, as well as in gaining waies: In suffering waies, as well as in doing waies: In discountenanced waies, as well as in such as the World doth countenance: In strait waies, as well as in broad waies: in rugged waies, as well as in plain smooth waies: In difficult, as well as in easie waies.

You see this in *Abraham* concerning the sacrificing of his son: In which act hee might seem to disobey in his *Obedience*: And the dutiful yeelding to it, might seem to contradict duty.

There seemed not only Nature and reason to cry down this act

of Obedience: but even the word too.

The yeelding of Obedience did seem to juttle against the Precept of Obedience. Yet you see, hee obeyed God. It is said -- *By Faith Abraham obeyed God. By Faith indeed. It was a strong Faith.*

That strong *Faith* that beleeveth hee should have a Son, did now obey God, in offering of his Son. Strong Obedience proceeded from his strong *Faith*. Strong *Faith* produceth strong Obedience.

1. Strong for Active,

2. Strong for Passive Obedience.

The same *Faith* doth supply the soul with Active strength, for doing duties: and with Passive strength for suffering duties.

1. A strong *Faith* is strong to bear Reproaches for *Christ*. As *Moses*, Hee esteemed the Reproach of *Christ* greater riches than the Treasures of Egypt, *Heb. 11. 26.* And *Paul* -- Therefore wee labour, and suffer Reproach, because wee trust in the living God, *1 Tim. 4. 10.*

2. A strong *Faith* is strong to bear losses for *Christ*. As they, *Heb. 10. 34.* Who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods: as if the enemy had done them a great-courtesie.

A strong *Faith* is strong to bear Persecutions, Scourges, Death it self for *Christ*. You see what the Apostles indured, what *Stephen* indured. Why, saith the Text -- Hee was a man full of Faith, *Act. 5. 8.* strong *Faith* did enable them to suffer, and bear, and to go through difficulties, prisons, persecutions, scourgings, &c. for *Christ*.

A strong Believer doth rejoyce if hee can hold up God (as it were) though himself bee down: if hee can raise up Gods Glory, though it bee by the ruine of himself: save his honour, by losse of himself.

What *Epaminondas* said: (who having resolved concerning his Buckler, either to defend it, or to dye for it; being wounded to death, brake forth into these words -- *Nam saluus est Clypeus meus?* Is my Buckler safe? If that bee safe, I am well.) So the Believer, in the midst of all his sufferings; if hee can keep his Buckler safe, hold up God, and his Glory: All is well.

3. A strong *Faith* will beleieve nothing contrary to his belief. All the temptations of Satan, all the arguments of men shall never bee able to reason him out of his *Faith*.

A weak *Faith* is quickly brought to deny his conclusion, to yeeld up the cause: Satan may make a man unsay, what formerly hee hath said. But a strong *Faith* will hold the conclusion against all Satans sophistry. His *Faith* hath been gotten up by many invincible experiences, from Gods behaviour to him, as a Father, from the souls behaviour to him, as a Child. And all that Satan can do, shall not out-reason his *Faith*. What a man faith by feeling, a temptation may make him unsay: but what a man faith by

Faith

Faith, nothing can make him unsay.

If Satan do assault such a man, and tell him; *God doth not love him; God is not his Father*: yet will the soul binde it self to this Mast, and hold his conclusion against all, with the Church, *Isa. 63. 16. -- Doubtless thou art our Father: thou Lord art our Father, our Redeemer.*

Say, Satan takes up arguments from Gods;

1. Inward, Or

2. Outward dealings with us.

1. From his Inward dealings. May bee, a man is in some present Desertion, and wants the clear Evidences, which formerly hee had; and Satan from thence doth argue, *That God is not our God; hee is not our Father*: yet will not a strong Faith bee reasoned out of his Faith.

The soul will yet conclude it, though it cannot clear it, and beleeve it, when it cannot see it. The strong Christian lives by Faith, not by feeling, and knows God may bee *His God*, though by sense it bee not discerned, but that *God is not his God*. You see this, in *Psal. 22. 1. -- My God! My God! There's Faith. Why hast thou forsaken mee!* There's sense. Faith held the conclusion against sense. That God was *his God*: though sense could not apprehend, but that hee was *forsaken of God*.

And therefore, when the eye of Sense and Evidence is put out, yet hee hath the eyes of Faith, to see and beleeve. And -- *Blessed is the man (saith our Saviour to Thomas) who believes, and sees not*, *Joh. 20. 29.* A strong Faith will trust God further than hee sees him. Faith is the Evidence of things not seen, *Heb. 11. 1.* Faith will trust upon the Promise of Mercy, in the want of Sense of Mercy. Our Faith is not begotten by sense and feelings: but by the Promise: and therefore in the want of sense and feelings, the soul may beleeve, *Isa. 50. 10. Though a man walk in darkness, and sees no light, yet may hee trust in the Lord, and lean upon his God.*

A weak Faith if it want feeling, it is gone, but the strong Faith will -- Hope against Hope, Beleeve against sense, Reason, and present Evidence, and can say, *God is mine*, though it want the present Sense and Evidence of it. It will trust in God a Father, when his dealings seem to argue him an Enemy. Faith will read Love in his angry looks, and look through the mist of Desertion, and see the affections of a Father, under the expressions of an Enemy. Thus did Job by Faith -- *Though thou kill mee: yet will I trust in thee.* Full well it knows, *Though God hide his face, yet hee cannot deny himself.*

2. Say hee takes an argument from Gods outward dealings in chastising and afflicting of us, and say, *If God loved thee, hee would not so afflict thee: If God were thy Father, hee would not so chastise thee.* However the weak Faith may bee born down with such a temptation as this, yet the strong Faith is not moved with such a

temptation: it is able to retort on Satan; because God loves mee, therefore hee scourgeth mee, that I might not bee condemned with the World. That I might not love the World, therefore hee suffers the World to frown on mee. That I might bee crucified to the World, therefore hee suffers mee to bee crucified in the World. Because I am a Child, therefore hee afflicteth mee. -- Hee scourgeth every Son, whom hee receiveth, Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, &c.

God takes liberty to chastise our bodies, to save our souls. And God loves tenderly, when hee corrects severely, *Job* 5. 17. *Pro.* 3. 11.

Thus doth a strong Faith hold up the conclusion of Faith against all the Reasonings of Satan against it. Let him produce never so many Evidences to the contrary, yet will hee not bee born down in it. It's a *maxime* of Faith, hee will hold to against all opposition whatsoever.

You see it was thus in *Job*. -- When God had taken away his goods, when his hand was upon his body, and upon his spirit too, not only withdrawing himself from him, but positively inflicting of his displeasure upon his soul: yet all that Satan could do by himself, all that hee could do by his friends, who joyned with Satan in the battel, could not make him unsay, what his heart and the Spirit of God had so often said, nothing shall make him to eat his own words: Nothing shall cause him to deny his integrity. The root of the matter was still in him: and hee will live and dye with this in his heart, with this in his mouth; that notwithstanding all this, *God is his God, God is his Father: his heart hath been sincere before him.* And this was a strong Faith that would bee thus resolute in beleeving, when hee had so much reason on the other side to bear him down.

4. A strong Faith will trust in God in difficulties, in difficult cases; in exigents. Here is the tryal of Trust. It will trust in God,

1. With small means.
2. Without means.
3. Against means.

1. With small means. Strong Beleevers know full well, bee the means never so small, if God bid them to bee effectual, they shall do the work. As *Jeremy* was drawn out of the Dungeon with old rotten Rages: so God can make use of weak and contemptible means, to effect his own purposes, to draw thee out of the Dungeon of affliction.

Faith knows God can help with few, as well as with many, with a small band, as well as with a great; all is one to him. It was that that *Asa* said to God, when *Zera* the *Ethyopian* came against him, with such a great host, that hee seemed to bee but a Centry in the midst of a large circumference, *2 Chron.* 14. 11. Lord, it is nothing with thee to help with many, or with few. Help us, Lord, for

for wee trust upon thee; and in thy name wee go out against this great multitude. And the day was theirs. But in another hee was overthrown, when the difficulty was less; because hee trusted not on the Lord. The like wee read of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. 20. 1, 2, 3, 4. and many others.

2. Strong Faith will trust in God without means.

Zeph. 3. 12. -- *I will leave in the midst of thee, an afflicted and poor people (a people stripped of all means) and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.* So 2 Cor. 1. 10, 11. -- *Wee had the sentence of death in our selves: wee saw no help, no means, and all this was -- That wee should not trust in our selves, but in God, which raiseth the dead,* 1 Tim. 5. 5. -- *Shee that is a Widow in deed, and desolate, Trusts in God, &c.*

Thus you see strong Faith will trust in God, in the absence of means, when all means are wanting. It knows, God is able to do his purpose without, as well as with means. A strong Faith makes God all its confidence. And therefore when all means fail, when all props are taken away: yet confidence is not.

Unbelief will trust God no further than it sees means to bring about the thing it desires.

You see the unbelieving Noble Man, when the Prophet *Elisha* told him in that great famine, that the next day there should bee such great plenty. What! saith hee, *If God could open the windows of Heaven, how could this bee?* Though there were a famine on earth, hee had no reason to think there was a dearth in Heaven: God was able to do it; his hand was not shortened. But here it was. Hee saw no means whereby this might bee effected; and therefore hee could not beleieve it.

God may work wonders, and yet in an ordinary way. You see here in this Famine. A wonder it was, that they should have such plenty, in so short a time. And it was too big for the noble mans Faith to beleieve. But yet you see it was a wonder wrought in an ordinary way.

The like you see in the *Israelites*, Psal. 78. 19, 20. -- *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness? Indeed hee smote the Rock, and the waters gushed out. But can hee provide flesh for his people also?* One would have thought that the former experience of Gods power should have satisfied them in this: that they that granted the one, could not have denyed the other, that God was able to do that also. But the former was over, and here was a new strait they were in; and they saw no means how it should bee effected; therefore they could not beleieve it.

The like of *Abaz*, Isa. 7. 11, 12. God told him that his enemies that were come against him, should not prevail against him: God would fight for him. And that hee might bee certain of this, hee bids him -- *Ask a sign in Heaven, or in the deep, for the confirmation of his Faith.* But saith *Abaz* -- *I will not tempt God.* What's that

that? *I will provide for my self. I will not trust in the want of means. I should tempt God in so doing.*

And many such *Ahazes* wee have in the World. They think, to trust in God in the absence of means, is to tempt God. What, say they, *doth God work wonders, that hee should do this without means?* Why God can do wonders, and yet in an ordinary way.

Thus *Strong Faith* will trust *without means*. God is not trusted at all, if not trusted alone. If wee take in any thing with God, in our trust, wee trust not God at all, as wee ought.

When men are brought to the lowest strait, they are nearest to the highest God. And then will *Faith* work best, when it works alone; and then is God nearest to help, when mans strength is small. *Mans extremity is Gods opportunity.*

The ancient Tragedians, when things were brought to that pass, that they saw no possibility of humane help, they used to bring down some of their Gods. Hence that Proverb. *Θεός έστι λύσις πάντων*. Not much unlike that Proverb among the Jews. -- *In the Mount of the Lord it shall bee seen.*

3. *A strong Faith* will trust *against means*, in the opposition of all means. Such know, that hee that can help *without means*, can help, if hee please *against all means*, -- *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?*

Thus *Moses* trusted in God, when the Red Sea was before them, the Egyptians behinde them, and the Mountains on each side of them. -- *Fear not, stand still, behold the salvation of the Lord, &c.*

Thus *David*, when the people would have stoned him. The Text saith. *David comforted himself in the Lord his God.* Thus *Daniel*, and the Three Children. *Abraham* also both in the receiving and offering of his Son *Isaac*.

a/ 5. *Strong Faith* is accompanied

1. *With much Peace.*

2. *With much Joy.*

1. *With much Peace.* *Strong Faith* lives in the upper Region above all storms. There's much variety of weather here below; now calms, now storms: but if a man were above, there's a continual serenity, and clearness. *Strong Faith* lives in Heaven above all storms; and therefore there's nothing but calmness and quiet, *Rom. 5. 1.* -- *Being justified by Faith, wee have Peace with God, &c.* 16. 3. -- *Thou wilt preserve him in perfect Peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, Rom. 15. 13.* The God of all Consolation, fill you with all Joy and Peace in believing.

Such a man, hee hath Peace above him. Peace with God. Hee hath Peace within him; a peaceable conscience; not a dead Peace, a sleepiness of Conscience; like unto the calmness of the dead Sea, whose calmness is not of Nature, but from a curse: But a sound Peace, a spiritual Peace, a Peace after War, a Peace joyned with War, and Conflict; the surest Peace of all.

2. *With*

2. *With much Joy.* So much Faith, so much Joy, Rom. 19. 13. -- 1 Pet. 1. 8. *In whom beleeving, yee rejoyce with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glery.* There's attending a strong Faith, a full Joy, an Harvest-Joy: Such a Joy as will hold out in troubles, Joy that's Persecution-Proof, Prison-Proof, Tribulation-Proof, Rom. 5. 3. -- *Wee joy in Tribulations.* Other men may joy in Prosperity, in Abundance: But this is a Joy that out-lasts Riches, out-lasts Comforts, a Joy which nothing can quench.

6. *Strong Faith will subdue strong corruptions, strong sins, strong lusts,* those Sons of Zerviah, that are too hard for us.

Faith makes use of *Sin-subduing Promises*: of a *Sin-subduing Christ*. And the more Faith, the more Strength is conveyed from Christ to us.

Faith sets the Power of Christ against the power of lust: the strength of Christ against the strength of corruption, who is able to subdue all things unto himself, and to conquer the most untamed corruptions.

7. *Strong Faith will overcome strong Temptations.* Temptations from the World, Temptations from Satan. Strong Faith subdues, where weak Faith is blown down with every blast of Temptation, not being able to stand out against the assaults of Satan.

Strong Faith overcomes the allurements and threats of the World: it overcomes all. *This is our victory, whereby wee overcome the World, even our Faith.*

8. *Strong Faith overcomes strong doubts,* answers strong Objections in the soul. Such doubts and objections move not them, that are ready to overwhelm a weak Faith. It will flye away with such twigs as will hinder the flight of weaker Christians.

There are doubts in the best Beleevers, So long as there is flesh, so long there will bee doubts: but strong Beleevers are not overcome with doubts, but will overcome doubts. Though Faith doth not expel, yet it conquers doubts, Rom. 4. 20. -- *Abraham staggered not through unbelief, but being strong in Faith, gave Glory to God.* That is, though there might bee some doubts, yet they prevailed not to the staggering of his Faith. His Faith overcame his doubtings. A weaker Faith is full of doubts, making the soul like a pare of Ballances, the scales whereof are wavering sometimes this way, sometimes that. The mind hath now its assenting, and by and by its dissenting: Now it saith, *God is my God, Christ is my Christ;* and anon it fears, *Christ is not his. God is not his.* Now it hopes its sins are pardoned, anon it fears, its sins are not pardoned.

Fides non omnem dubitationem expellit, sed vincit.

Now the soul thrusts out for Comfort, and by and by draws back with discouragement. On this side it sees ground why it should beleeve it shall bee saved: yet on the other side sees ground, whereby to fear it shall bee damned.

But a strong Faith overcomes all these doubts: having strong persuasions of its interest in Christ. It saith, *Christ is mine:* and nothing

nothing shall make it unsay, *Christ is not mine*. It is able to answer all.

9. *Strong Faith, and strong Prayers.*

1. *Strong to wrestle with God.*

2. *Strong to prevail with God.*

1. Such are strong to wrestle with God. *Faith* doth furnish a man with a deep sense of his wants; with strong affections, with strong Promises to wrestle with God, to have those wants supplied. *Jacobs* Prayer was called a *wrestling with God*. It was a *wrestling-prayer*, such an one as proceeded from a strong *Faith*, as you may read in the story, *Gen.* 32. 24. to the 30. where hee encounters God, with Gods own strength; the strength of his Promise, the strength of his Covenant. -- *O God of my Fathers, Abraham, Isaac: Thou hast said, thou wilt bless mee; thou badst mee return into my own Country, and thou wouldst deal well with mee. Deliver mee now, then I beseech thee, from the hand of my Brother, &c.*

Moses Prayer was a *wrestling-Prayer*, *Exod.* 32. 10. to the 16. where hee was so strong as to stop the proceedings of God, against a rebellious people: insomuch that God bids him -- *let mee alone*. It was a *Believing-Prayer*.

So may it bee said of *Hezekiahs* Prayer, *Daniels* Prayers: They were *wrestling-Prayers*, *strong-Prayers*.

I will instance but in one. *The Woman of Canaan*, *Mat.* 15. 11. to the 28. where you see how shee wrestled with *Christ*: Her case was doubtfull for a long time; shee went through great temptations: shee is reported to bee a *Woman great in Faith*.

1. *There was Tentatio Taciturnitatis*. There was the tryal of silence. Shee prayes, and *Christ* answers her not a word: Here was a great tryal; when God shall hide himself in a Cloud, and not answer her prayers.

2. *There was Tentatio Particularitatis*: first nothing, then worse than nothing, *vers.* 24. -- *I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. As if hee had said, -- *Thou dost not belong to the election of Grace: thou art not in Covenant: I came only to mine own, not to thee: therefore I will not help thee*.

3. *There was Tentatio Indignitatis*. The tryal of Indignity, *vers.* 26. -- *It is not meet to take the Childrens bread, and cast it unto Dogs*.

Yet see the strength of her *Faith*, how it inabled her to outwrestle these temptations; how it inabled her to follow God. -- *True Lord; but yet the Dogs may eat the crumbs*. Bee it, that I am but a *Dog*; yet *thy Dog*. And if thou wilt not give mee leave to eat of *Childrens morsels*: deny mee not *Childrens crumbs*, such as fall from their Table, such as they have no need of.

Thus you see, strong *Faith* produces strong Prayers, strong to wrestle with God himself.

2. *Strong to prevail with God*. They are not only *wrestling*, but *prevailing-Prayers*. *Jacob*

Jacob wrestled; and Jacob prevailed: Moses wrestled; and Moses prevailed. David wrestled; and hee prevailed: The Woman of Canaan wrestled; and shee prevailed, *vers. 18.* -- *O! Woman! great is thy Faith: Bee it unto thee, even as thou wilt.* So the Church for Peter: and they brake open the Prison doors, and set him free.

They are called *availing Prayers*, *Jam. 5. 19.* -- *The effectual fervent Prayer of a Righteous man availeth much.* Thus strong Faith hath strong Prayers.

And let mee adde this more.

A strong Faith doth not only make strong Prayers: But a strong Faith can take

1. *Long Delaies,*

2. *Strong Denyals, well at Gods hand.*

1. *A strong Faith can take long Delaies well at Gods hand.* -- *Hee that beleeveth, makes not haste.* Such a man can wait upon Gods time, for the bestowing of a Mercy. Such a man knows that God hath a fulness of time to bestow mercy in.

And as it was said of the sending of Christ (that universal Mercy, that summum genus of Mercy) when the fulness of time was come, God sent his Son: So when the fulness of time is come, God will send us our desires; bestow the Mercy. And therefore hee can wait.

A weak Faith is quickly worn out, it cannot wait; if God come not presently, it is cast down, and can wait no longer. You see this in the Two Disciples going to Emmaus. -- *Wee hoped that this should have been hee that should have delivered Israel, but hee is dead: and this is the third day.* They might have waited a little longer; they were too quick and hasty: what though the third was come, it was not yet expired: great things might have been done yet before night. But weak Faith is impatient of delays. -- *This evil proceedeth from the Lord: shall I wait on him any longer?* was the voice of that wicked King, *2 King. 6. 33.* -- *Every vision faileth,* *Ezek. 12. 22.* so they, and too often many better than they.

But now a strong Faith will hold out in delays, yea, and pray more earnestly. As you see David did: who though -- *his Eyes failed, his Flesh failed, though his Heart failed,* yet hee renewed his supplication from day to day. The like in Daniel, in the Woman of Canaan, in Hannah, and in the Blind man, hee was blamed for his importunity, and was yet the more importunate.

Such a man knows, that hee who hath any thing from God must continue in Prayer. Jacob, *all night*, David, *day and night*. Jonah, *three dayes and nights*. Daniel, *one and twenty dayes and nights*. Moses, *forty dayes, and forty nights*. God often defers his people, to inhanche, and raise up the price of mercy, to make them more fit for mercy, more thankfull for mercy. And therefore hee can wait.

2. *Strong Faith cannot only take long delays, But denyals well.*

well. It can submit to denials, as well as to grants. You see it in *David*. Hee had strong desires for the continuance of the life of his Child. God denied it. See how calm, how submissive hee was, in the denial; insomuch that hee was a wonder to all his servants.

A weak *Faith* doth faint and is discouraged at the denials of requests. It cannot tell how to take a denial of God: but a strong *Faith* can take denials as well as grants.

A strong *Faith* is clear in this, that God is a Father, and therefore his denials are in mercy: all is for good: hee knows, if God hear him not according to his will, yet according to his good.

Est non ad voluntatem, tamen ad sanctitatem.

A strong *Faith* submits to Gods wisdom, and Gods will, who is the *only Wise*. Wee may desire a thing at Gods hand, and in our wisdom may judge it to bee good: But God in his Wisdom, who knows the issue of things, sees it will bee for our hurt; and therefore denies it. And *Faith* submits to his wisdom, and follows him, as a blinde man his guide.

Wee may ask some things too earnestly, which are more profitably denied, then granted. As *Solomon* said of *Adenijahs* request, so I may say of many of ours: Wee ask our lives, wee desire our Bane; such things as would hurt us, and undo us. And are not those things mercifully denied, which without hurt cannot bee granted? This is to crosse us with a Mercy. A child desires a knife of the Father, The Child sees no hurt in it: but the Father doth. And shall wee not then submit to the Wisdom of our Father?

A man may desire this evil to bee taken away; this cross, this affliction to bee removed; this temptation, this corruption to bee taken away. God denies it, seeing it best for a man to bee exercised with them. And *Faith* will submit.

Again, a man desires this outward mercy; it may bee Riches, may bee Honours, the great things of the World: And thinks (it may bee) if God did raise him, hee would raise God: if God would make him great, hee would make God great.

Voluntas Dei optima; & si optima, optima vult.

But now God denies this. God sees it is better that thou want them, than injoy them. And *Faith* submits to Gods Wisdom, and to Gods Will in it. *Gods Will is his will:* and saith, *Not my will, but thy will bee done. Gods will is the best, and being best, wills what is the Best both for his own glory, and our good.*

Again, thou desirest some spiritual mercy from God. Perhaps thou desirest *Perfection of Grace* in this life: and God sees it is better that corruptions should dwell in thee, as the Lees among the Wine, to keep the Wine sweet, to humble thee; or that they might bee as pricks in thy eyes, and goads in thy sides, to make thee more forward and fervent in holy performances.

Perhaps thou desirest a great deal of Knowledge with *Saul*, to bee higher by the head and shoulders, than thy fellow Christians:

Or

Or with David, to bee wiser than thy Teachers: God denies it; and Faith takes the denial: knowing all is for the best. It may bee, it might beget pride; this would puff up; it would bee too great a sail for so smal a Boat; and rather over-turn thee, than let thee forward.

Perhaps thou desirest to enjoy the continual light of Gods countenance; to bee like the Island of Rhodes, in perpetuo Sole: in continual Sun-shine. But God denies it, thou art sometimes in the valley of tears, as well as sometimes in the Mountain of Joy. Thou hast cloudy and clear dayes, calmy and stormy seasons. And Faith submits to this denial. It sees all is for the best. That wee should not have our Heaven upon Earth. This might occasion spiritual Pride, as you see in Paul. It might occasion a common-esteem of so great a mercy. And therefore submits.

Thus you see how a strong Faith is strong in Prayers, can take long delays, and submit to denials too from God.

My Brethren; this is the strength of Faith that can bee so strong in Desires, so patient in Delays, so submissive in Denials. Here is strong Faith.

10. Strong Faith hath strong desires to go to Christ by death; and that Christ should come to him by Judgement.

1. To go to Christ by death. A Beleever hath *Vitam in Patientia, Mortem in Desiderio*: Hee hath Life in Patience, Death in Desire. Life is his Sea, where hee meets with nothing but storms; Death is his Harbour.

Life is his way, his Inne at the best. But Heaven is his Home; There his best Friends are: there his chief business lies; there is his abiding-place; and thither hee desires to go.

A weak Faith is loath to dye; is afraid of death: hee hath not yet gotten his Evidence sealed, his hope in his hand. But when this is done, then with Paul, I desire to bee dissolved. Or with Simon, when hee had once gotten Christ into his armes -- Lord, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in Peace; for my eyes have seen thy salvation. You hear how David cries, Psal. 42, 1, 2. As the Hart panteth for the Water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O Lord. My soul thirsteth for God; when shall I come and appear before God!

2. Strong Faith hath strong desires that Christ would come to Judgement. It is not well contented there should bee a distance betwixt Christ and it. And therefore cries with the Spouse, Cant. 8, 14. -- Make haste, my Beloved. -- Why are the Chariots so long in coming?

Though in another case it bee true, that the Prophet saith, -- Hee that beleeves makes not haste: yet in this case, Hee that beleeves most, makes most haste.

Here are but some broken Rings passing betwixt Christ and us, Here is but the contract and espousals made betwixt Christ and the

Soul. But the day of Judgement is the great solemnization of the marriage. As the espoused Bride longs for the marriage day: so the Soul that is espoused to *Christ*, longs for the consummation of this blessed marriage.

Weak Faith desires the coming of *Christ*, but yet would fain bee fitter and readier for him: as the Wife desires the presence of her Husband: but yet would have her house in order, before hee come: so they.

But a strong Faith hath all in readines, and desires nothing more than a consummation of these daies of sin, and the eternal fruition and injoyment of her best Husband.

Use of Exhort.

Wee are now fallen (at last) upon the last use, the Use of Exhortation, wherein I shall exhort you,

1. To get Faith.
2. To exercise Faith.
3. To grow in Faith.

1. Let mee exhort you to labour to get Faith. Let the chief of your pains, and choice of your indeavours bee for the getting of Faith. It is a thing to bee lamented, how men do labour and toil for earthly things, and how they neglect Heavenly. Oh! That men should rise up early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness, for the compassing of earthly things! But in the mean time, the things of Heaven are neglected! no man labours for them. Faith and Grace are the great drugges of the World, they lye upon our hands, they will not off; no man bids mony for them, no man indeavours the compassing of them.

Oh! that men should care for the Body, and neglect the Soul! feed the Body, and starve the Soul! cloathe the Body, and the Soul go naked! That men should labour after other things, and never set themselves to the indeavour and compassing of this one thing necessary! Shall I urge some motives?

1. Consider the greatnes of this sin of Unbelief.
2. The Necessity of Faith.
3. The Excellency of it.

1. Consider the greatnes of the sin of Unbelief. It is such a sin as offers injury and wrong to All-God. It wrongs all the attributes of God. As Faith doth honour all Gods attributes: It is said of Abraham, that -- Hee gave glory to God by believing, Rom. 4. 20. Hee honoured his Mercy, his Wisdome, his Power, &c. So on the contrary, unbelief is such a sin, as wrongs all: The Wisdome, Power, Mercy, Truth and Justice of God.

1. You wrong the Wisdome of God: you slight and undervalue the Glorious thoughts of his Wisdome, -- Rejecting the Counsel of God against your selves, Luk. 7. 30.

2. You wrong the Mercy and Love of God, even the most precious thoughts of Mercy, that ever his breast did conceive towards sinful men: the most glorious expression of love: Angels wonder.

3. You

3. You wrong the Power of God: you straiten and limit his Power, Psal. 78. 41. -- *They tempted God, and limited the holy one of Israel in the wilderness, by their Unbelief.* So wee read in the Gospel, Mark 6. 5. -- *Christ could not do any miracles in that place, because of their Unbelief.*

4. You wrong his Truth. As -- *Hee that beleeves hath put to his seal, that God is true; that his Word is true, his Promise true; hee will save sinners: so on the contrary, Hee that beleeves not, makes God a Liar, 1 Joh. 5. 10.* Indeed God is true, and whether wee beleeve, or beleeve not, God is faithful, as the Apostle hath it, 1 Tim. 2. 13.

But inasmuch as in us lies, wee make God untrue, make him a Liar. Our unbelief doth give God the real lye in all.

1. And of what a fearful nature then is Unbelief! God hath promised the pardon of sin, and hath annexed his Oath to his Promise, and his Seal to his Oath: and if wee beleeve not, wee make him untrue in his Promise, his Oath, his Covenant, &c.

2. Unbelief is a Mother-sin; it is a Root-sin, the summum genus of sin; such a sin as hath all sins folded up in the bowels of it; a catholick sin. And therefore the Apostle expresseth sinners of all sorts under this general (*Children of Unbelief*) which is as much as *Children of all ungodliness*, such as had all sin in them.

Unbelief is the womb of sin. If you could rip up Unbelief, you shall finde all sin in the bowels of it. There is *Pride, Profaneness, Rebellion, contempt of God, contempt of his Word, hardness of Heart, love of the World, Covetousness*; There is all, all sins lye in the belly of this monster Unbelief.

An unbelieving man is a proud Person: an unbeliever is an hard-hearted person: an unbelieving person is a prophane spirited person, a rebellious man: hee is all.

Unbelief is both the Entertainer, and Maintainer of sin. It is not only the Mother, but the Nurse of sin. Every sin doth suck the dug of Unbelief. It is a sin-succouring, a sin-nourishing sin. Not only the Breeder, but the Feeder of sin. Not only the Begetter, but the Nourisher of sin. It is such a Root as doth nourish and succour all the branches of sin.

There is nothing holds up the Kingdom of sin, but Unbelief. If men would beleeve, the Kingdom of sin would totter and come down. But whiles men beleeve not, the hands of sin are strengthened, the kingdom of sin is held up in us.

Sin goes to Unbelief for protection, and there it hath it. Unbelief will bee a shield to keep off any blow that is given to sin.

Sin goes to Unbelief for security, and unbelief secures and warrants sin: sin dwelleth where unbelief keeps the house, sin lies down securely under the shadow of unbelief. Let curse and Hell bee threatened against sin, yet unbelief will secure it. It makes but childe-play of all the threats of God. Sin keeps the house, and unbelief bars the door, and keeps out all that would endanger sin: It will secure it.

Ux nobis, si
nec juranti
Deo credimus.

and Sin goes to unbelief, not only for defence, but for maintenance: and unbelief will maintain sin: it will fetch in provision for lust. It is not only the Entertainer, but the Maintainer of sin. It shall want no morsels: unbelief will furnish it.

3. *Unbelief is a soul-killing-sin, a Soul-damning-sin.* It is a controversy among many. *Whether Negative unbelief damn men.*

But wee will not enter on the controversy. For *Positive unbelief*, of which nature ours is now under the light of the Gospel, It is agreed upon all sides, that this is *damning*. -- *Hee that beleeves shall bee saved: but hee that beleeves not, shall bee damned.* Mercy it self saith so: Hee that you look to bee saved by, saith it, *Mark 16. 16.*

Nay, not only *damned*, but the *forest damnation* of all; the *deepest Cellars of Hell*, the *lowest Vaults of Hell* are reserved for such, who are *Unbelievers now under the Gospel*. -- *This is condemnation*, (that is, the *forest condemnation*) *That Light is come into the World:* (that a *Christ is sendred to you*, a *Christ is offered to you*) and men *love darkness rather than light*: yet men will not beleeve, *John 3. 19.*

There is no fall into Hell, like such an one as is taken at a stumble at *Christ*: No *damnation* like that, which is pronounced in the *Court of Mercy*. An *Unbeliever is condemned in the Court of Mercy*. And when *Mercy it self condemns*, as it shews the offence to bee *hainous*: so it makes the *condemnation the more heavy*.

As the *swetest Vineger* comes from the *sweetest Vine*, so out of the *sweetest Mercy*, the *forest condemnation*. It will bee *ten thousand times easier* for those, who are *condemned under the Law*; their torments will not bee so *heavy*, *Hell* will not bee so *hot* to them, as to such who are now *condemned under the Gospel*.

It had been better for you, that you had been *born Turks and Heathens*, such as never heard of *Christ*, than *Christians*, if you live and dye in an *unbelieving condition*.

Thus you see, *Unbelief is a remediless sin*. Such a sin as there is no *remedy* for it, no *plaister* for it.

All other sins have a *Remedy*, and *Christ* is the *Remedy*: But *unbelief denies the Remedy*. There is a *plaister* for *Drunkenness*, for *Swearing*, for *Murder*, &c. All other sins have a *Plaister*, and *Christ* is that *Plaister*: But *Unbelief denies the Plaister*.

God gives the *Mercy of the Book* to all other sins, if sinned against the *Law*, and condemned by the *Law*: yet hee tenders the *Mercy of the Book*. -- *Hee that beleeves shall bee saved.* But *Unbelief rejects this Mercy*: It will not read.

If the *Law condemn us*, wee are suffered to appeal to the *Gospel*: If *Justice condemn us*, wee are suffered to appeal to *Mercy*. As you see the *Publican*, who was arraigned, sentenced, and condemned by the *Law*: But hee appeals to the *Court of Mercy*. -- God bee merciful
and

to mee a sinner. And you see the Sentence took no hold on him.

But now, If Mercy condemn us, if the Gospel condemn us, whether shall wee appeal? whether shall wee goe? Now it is Mercy that condemns unbelieving men: they are condemned in the Court of Mercy. Hence one, There is no sin that doth peremptorily; (and Quod eventum) damn us, but unbelieving. There is no sin that doth (de facto) bring death, but unbelieving. Other sins do create a merit of death: but unbelief doth actually bring death upon the soul. While a man beleeves not, hee is under the Covenant of Works, and there sin doth de facto bring death: it bindes all sin upon the conscience, makes a man to stand out, to answer for his own guilt, bear his own curse, and therefore it is said, Joh. 3. 18.-- Hee that beleeveth not, is condemned already: Hee is condemned in all Courts.

Non filius Diaboli facit quicunque peccata: Filius Diaboli infidelitas facit,

1. In the Court of Justice. The Law condemns him. -- Cursed is every man that continues not in every thing that is written in the Law, to do the same, Gal. 3. 10.

2. In the Court of Mercy. That condemns him. This is the sentence there -- Hee that beleeveth not, shall bee damned, Mark 16. 16.

3. In the Court of Conscience. Hee is self-condemned, and hath a beginning of the execution.

Thus then you see of what a fearful nature is this sin of unbelief; It is the greatest damning sin now under the Gospel.

2 Motives from the necessity of Faith.

1. In respect of our Persons.

2. In respect of our Performances.

1. Faith is needful, in respect of our Persons. Our Persons are:

1. Under the guilt of sin, of many thousand sins. And without Faith, there is no Justification.

2. Under the power of sin, of lust. And without Faith, no subduing.

3. Under the pollution and filth of sin. And wee had need of Faith for the purifying of our hearts.

So that Faith is needful for the justifying of our Persons, the subduing of our lusts, the purifying of our hearts.

2. Faith is needful, in respect of our Performances. Faith is necessary to every work of a Christian: needful to every Ordinance.

Wee must pray in Faith; hear in Faith; receive in Faith; do all things in Faith. Faith must incorporate it self with every duty. -- Whatever is not of Faith, is sin; Rom. 14. 23. Whatever is before Faith is only the issue of a corrupt nature, and of a corrupt conscience; and therefore it cannot please God; Tit. 1. 15. Rom. 10. 14.

Faith is the salt, which seasons and sweetens every duty. It is the

the life, and soul of every performance; without which all are but dead, and stinking works; and cannot please God. *Faith is to duty, as the Soul is to the Body.*

When you go to *Prayer*, you had need of *Faith*, whereby you may -- *Cry Abba, Father*; without which *Prayer* is but the complaint of *Nature*; or the cry of a *hopeless and desperate heart*.

When you go to *hear*, you had need of *Faith*, to incorporate it self with the word heard; without which the word will not profit us: nor the word *Promising*, nor the word *threatning*, the one to humble us, the other to raise us, and comfort us.

When you go to *receive*, you had need of *Faith*. Hee goes to work without *tooles*, that goes to any Ordinance without *Faith*.

You have need of *Faith* to give you admission into Gods Presence. -- Draw neer with a true heart in assurance of *Faith*, Heb. 10. 22.

You have need of *Faith* to give you acceptance in the work.

You have need of *Faith* to procure a blessing, when all is done.

Faith is the great Grace, that is to bee imployed in all the Ordinances of God. This must run through every Ordinance, if you would profit by them. The word must bee mingled with *Faith*, *Prayer* with *Faith*, &c.

Unbelief makes every Ordinance of God unprofitable to us. What is the reason that men hear the Word, and get no more benefit; but because they *beleeve not*? Heb. 4. 2. *The Word preached did not profit them, because it was not mingled with Faith in them that heard it.*

Do you think the word of *Threatning* could bee heard, and you not bee humbled, if you did beleeve the Truth of all? who were able to lift up his head, nay to stand under the threats of the great God of Heaven and Earth, if hee did beleeve? It is said -- *The Devils beleeve and tremble*, Jam. 2. And had you but as much *Faith* as they to beleeve the truth of what God threatens against sin, it would make the stoutest sinner of you all to tremble.

And do you think the word *Promising*, *Beseeking*, *Intreating* could bee so unprofitable, if you had *Faith* to mingle with it, to apply it to your selves?

It is, because you bring no *Faith* to the Word, that the Word of God is not a raising, a quickening, a comforting word to your souls: That it is not an inlightening, a convincing, a converting, and a reforming word.

So for the Sacraments. Could these bee so unprofitable? could you live under them, and get no further victory of lust? no more increase of *Grace*, if you did bring and exercise *Faith* here, to fetch from this treasure opened.

It is necessary to every Ordinance, necessary to your Callings, necessary to every condition. Wee had need of *Faith* to go through

through all the conditions of this life: Through Prosperity, Adversity, Sickness, Health: Losses and Injoyments. As the Apostle said of Patience, the Daughter, so I say of Faith the Mother. -- You have need of Faith, that after yee have suffered the Will of God, yee might inherit the Promise, Heb. 10. 36.

If our condition bee prosperous, wee had need of Faith, to see all is for good, and need of Faith, to inable us to make a good use of it.

1. You had need of Faith, to see the Tenor of your injoyments; That you injoy them, not only out of leave, but out of Love: not only from a general Providence, but from a particular Promise.

2. You had need of Faith, to see further than your present Estates: to look upon these pence, and farthings as earnestes of better things: as something in hand for those things in hope.

3. You had need of Faith, to see the heart of the giver in the gifts; his Affection, in the expression; the God of Mercy, in the injoyment of Mercy; to taste the fountain in the Stream.

An unbelieving man hee is not able to clear this; Hee may have prosperity in Judgement, and heap up Riches to his own destruction; All his Wealth may bee but fuel to that fire, to make Hell hotter; as Oile to kindle the flame of lust, so fuel to increase the fire of torment hereafter.

So if our condition bee troublesome and afflicted, wee had need of Faith to see all is for the best, and need wee had of Faith, to make the best use of it, to humble us, wean us, winne us, &c. Faith can see good in all; making all good to him, though in themselves never so evil.

3. There are Motives drawn from the excellency of Faith. I shall say no more of it, but what I have already said, and you may read in these several Royalties of Faith already laid down.

The second branch of the Exhortation is to you that have Faith.

Let mee exhort you to exercise your Faith.

1. In matter of Justification under the guilt of sin. Trust in God for Pardon, for Justification. What though thy sins bee never so great, Iniquity, Transgression, and sin? sins of Nature? sins of Course? sins of Custome? what though they bee bloody and crimson sins? yet hee can pardon, hee can forgive them.

Thy sins are great: his Mercy is greater. Thy sins are many: His Mercies are more. Thy sins have abounded: His Mercy superabounds. As thou hast been plentiful in sinning, so hee is in Mercy for pardoning sin, Isa. 1. 18. Though your sins were as crimson, they shall bee made white as Snow: though as red as Scarlet, they shall bee as Wooll, Isa. 55. 7. Let him return to the Lord, and hee will have mercy upon him; and to our God: for hee will multiply pardons.

Though thy sins have weakened the Law, and made that unable

Non datur
summum ma-
lum.

to save thee, or do thee good, Rom. 8 3. yet they have not weakened Christ and Grace. -- Christ is able to save to the utmost, even to the utmost of your sins, the utmost of your doubts and fears.

There is neither quality nor quantity of sins, that can pose the fulness of Christ. There is not so much evil in sin, in all thy sins -- as there is Mercy in him. -- If thou canst believe, -- all things are possible to the Believer. They are Christ's own words, Mark. 9. 23. It is possible for thy greatest rebellions to pass away as a cloud, and to be dispelled and scattered, as a mist, if thou canst believe. Hee can drown Mountains, as well as Molehills.

2. Trust in him for Sanctification. Christ is full of all Grace and Truth, Joh. 1. 14. hee is able to fill a World of hearts with Grace. Thou desirest more love, brokenness of heart, sincerity, fruitfulness. Christ is able to afford thee all of all this.

3. Trust in him for mortification of thy lusts and corruptions. Go over to Christ for power to subdue your lusts and unruly corruptions. If ever you would make any happy conquest of lust, by Faith, have recourse to Christ: there you shall have strength against your unruly affections. Christ is as able to cleanse, as to clear, to purge, to subdue, and take down the power of sin, as to take away the guilt of sin.

1. Wee have his Prayer, to subdue and conquer our lusts, to sanctifie our Natures, John 17. 17. --- Sanctifie them through thy Truth.

2. Wee have his Promise. -- I will subdue your iniquities, Micah 7. 19. -- Sin shall no more have dominion over you, Rom. 6. 14.

3. Wee have his Power, who is able to subdue all things to himself, Phil. 3. 21. Hee will trample Satan under our feet.

4. Wee have his office and fidelity to appeal unto; where wee may complain of our own flesh. Hee undertook it, as a part of his business, to purge and cleanse his people, Tit. 2. 14. Hee came not only to be a Redeemer, but to be a Refiner, a Purifier. Hee gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquitie, and to cleanse and purifie us, to be his peculiar people, zealous of good works.

5. Wee have his Merits, as a Sanctuary to fly to; as to a Laver, as to a Fountain set open to wash us from all sin, filthiness and uncleanness, Zach. 13. 1.

4. Exercise Faith, in case of Difficulties.

1. In case of Temptation. Thou art it may be in many Temptations, Exercise Trust. Thou knowest who hath conquered Death, Hell, who hath overcome Principalities and Powers, all the Powers of Darkness; who hath led captivity captive; and triumphed over all, on the Cross. Trust therefore in him.

2. For support and strength in the Combat: Hee hath promised, -- My Grace shall be sufficient, 2 Cor. 12. 9. -- God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able: But will,
 10

with the Temptation give an issue, that wee may bee able to bear it,
1 Cor. 10. 13.

2. Trust in him for deliverance out of it, and victory over it. That
hee should conquer the Strong man, and snatch us as brands out of
the fire, and tread down Satan under our feet, Rom. 16. 20. Deliver us
out of Temptations, 2 Pet. 2. 9. The Lord knows how to
deliver his out of temptations.

5. Exercise Trust in case of Desertions. When God seems to
hide himself, or withdraw himself from our souls; withholding ei-
ther his quickening, or his comforting Spirit: yet trust still. --
Thou that walk in darknesse and see no light: Trust in the Name of the
Lord, and rest upon your God, Isa. 50. 10. Trust in God in the
darkest night of Desertion; cast anchor there, as the Apostle did.

What though the soul were as dark as Hell: yet God can make
it as light as Heaven. That God that caused light to shine out of dark-
ness, can also shine into our dark hearts.

What though there bee nothing within thee, nothing without
thee, nothing round about thee, to comfort thee: yet there is
something above thee. Cast anchor in Heaven: there's an Al-
mighty God, to stay thy soul upon. The Name of the Lord is a suffi-
cient prop, and rock to rest upon in any condition. The Name of
the Lord is a strong Tower: the Righteous flee to it, and are exalted,
Prov. 18. 10. or is in safety.

There's safety in the Tower, when all other forts and Bulwarks
are gone; when Out-works are taken, and Walls are scaled, there
is yet safety in the Tower.

So here: when all Out-works are gone, when all our Eviden-
ces seem to bee gone, when nothing appears to comfort us, yet
the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower to flye to, a rock to rest
on; whereupon being exalted, wee are delivered from danger, and
set out of gun-shot. Hence wee read the Name of the Lord oppo-
sed to all staies and props, which Faith had to rest on, Isa. 50. 10.
-- Hee that walks in darknesse, and hath no light, let him trust in the
Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

Here is such a bottom for Faith to rest upon, that if Faith
should fail, All God would fail with it: His Mercy, His Truth, His
Wisdom, His Power, &c.

Let us then cast anchor here, and wait till the time of refresh-
ment come; wait till all storms and clouds bee blown over. Light
is sown for the Righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. But wee
must wait with the Husbandman with patience, till the crop bee
thoroughly ripe. Thou must not look for clear day, so soon as
thou hast taken shelter: nor a calm so soon as thou hast cast an-
chor: but there thou must abide, ride at anchor, wait till the time of
Refreshment shall come from the Lord.

Godly security, and apprehension of safety do not ever attend
the act of Faith at the heels. To trust is the act of Faith, and apprehended

hended security is the fruit of beleeving, and therefore comes not till afterwards.

Here is thy comfort as was said before; if thou diest whilst thou lyest at anchor, having anchored on this rock, thou dyest in the ship, not in the Sea; thou dyest in the Covenant, and there is safety, though the storm never cease. Thy condition is safe, and secure, though thou do not yet apprehend the safety and security of it.

Never soul miscarried in a trusting way. There is not one example in the Word, no not one in the World, where ever man trusted in God, and was ashamed, -- Psal. 22. 4, 5. *Our Fathers trusted in thee. They trusted, and were delivered.* God hath ingaged himself; hee hath not only set the Sun, and the Moon, and Stars to pawn; not only Heaven and Earth, but even himself too. Hee hath ingaged his Truth, his Mercy, his Promise, his Wisdome, and Power, to save and keep them who trust in him.

All Heaven would sink, if that soul that truly leans, and trusts in God should miscarry.

6. *In case of outward Calamity*, not only Personal, but National. Other Nations God hath dealt withal, as with *Jerusalem*. -- *Hee turned them upside down, as a Dish, and wiped them,* 2 King. 21. 13. Indeed wee have enjoyed Peace and Plenty: Peace with Plenty, and Plenty with Peace. How many ships deep laden with Mercy hath the stream of the Gospel brought to our shore? But yet our sins may give us occasion to suspect the water heating for us, Rods are preparing for us, except wee return.

Would you then bee safe in the evil day? *Trust in the Lord.* -- *Hee that trusts in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him about,* Psal. 32. 10. Hee shall bee begirt with Mercy, Mercy shall imbrace him on every side.

As Faith doth compass Mercy: so Mercy compasseth Faith. As the Beleever imbraces Mercy: so Mercy imbraces him: Hee shall bee begirt with Mercy. And not Mercy only, but all Gods attributes are for him.

As whilst a man is an Unbeleever, all God is against him; All the Power of God, the Wisdome of God, the Justice of God is against him: so if one bee a Beleever, all is for him. Faith makes all God ours; his Mercy ours, his Power, his Justice, &c. As *Jehoshaphat* said to *Ahab*. -- *I am as thou art, and my people as thy people,* 2 Chron. 18. 3. So God to a beleeving soul, all hee is, or hath, is for its use.

Faith doth initiate us into Covenant with God: And there being a Covenant, *All God is for us.*

Well then, Let this exhort us all to bee resolute and peremptory in beleeving, as *Esther*. -- *If I perish, I perish,* in a beleeving way.

3. Let this exhort us to grow up in Trust, to grow to Perfection. There

There is a Perfection

1. Of Nature.
2. Of Degrees.

All Believers have the same Perfection of Faith, for kind: but all have not the same Perfection of degrees. Well then, You have that Perfection in the kind: labour for this Perfection of degrees also. Grow up from trust of Affiance, to the trust of Assurance. Let us not ever bee staggering and doubting: but come to some grounded perswasion of Gods Love; labour to bee rooted and grounded in love; labour to work out all doubts and fears, whereby wee dishonour God, wrong our selves.

1. Weakening our Faith.
2. Hindring our growth.
3. Disabling our selves to work.
4. Discouraging our selves in our Christian way.
5. Gratifying Satan.

And let us labour to grow up to higher measures in Believing. Many encouragements might bee named.

1. The more thou growest in Faith, the more thou growest in the love and favour of God; the more thou win'st his Love. There is nothing in the World doth so much win Gods favour, as a great degree of Faith; Abraham was therefore called the friend of God.

And therefore though thou mayest bee saved with a less degree: yet if thou wouldest grow more in Gods favour, grow more in Faith.

2. The more Faith the more Grace: the more love of God, the more Hope, the more Patience, the more Courage, Obedience, Repentance, Humility.

Thou weak Christian, if thou desirest more brokenness of heart for sin, more love to God, &c. Why the way is to strengthen thy Faith.

3. The more Faith, the more spiritual Comfort, the more Peace, Joy and consolation. These are the fruits of Faith.

4. The more Faith, the more strength to prevail with God in Prayer.

And therefore let this put you on to labour for the increase of Faith. Grow from Faith to Faith.

In Temporals wee are ready to look above us, who is higher, richer, not below us, who is poorer. But in spirituals wee look below us, not above us, behind us, not before us; how many come short of our measure: not how many do out-strip us. And therefore wee content our selves with that wee have. But let us labour to forget all behind, and to presse forward to the mark of the Rich calling of God in Christ Jesus, as the Apostle did. If thy Faith bee true, it is of a growing Nature.

Now to all this I will adde some means.

1. To get Faith.

2. To increase Faith.

1. Means for the begetting of Faith.

1. Labour to keep close to Faith-begetting Ordinances. These are

The Word.

Prayer.

1. Frequent the powerful and sincere preaching of the word of God; a Faith-begetting means. Faith comes by hearing, Rom. 10. 17. True Faith is the Daughter of Mercy. For this end God hath set up this Ordinance in the Church, that it might bee a means for the begetting Faith in the hearts of unbelieving men. And God doth often in the opening of Scripture, open our understandings, that wee may beleeve, Luk. 24. 45. John 20. 31.

And in the hearing of the Word, keep thy Ear open, to hear what God saith by his Spirit in the Gospel. Faith comes not by mercy of the Law, but of the Gospel.

And in the Gospel, dwell upon Faith-breeding Promises. Indeed, all the Promises tend to beget Faith: but especially such, wherein the good Will of God, and the Heart of God is discovered: such wherein the freeness and richnes of Gods Promises are discovered. These Promises are of two sorts.

1. Either such as are conditional; granted upon the performance of some duty in use. As such as these. Believe, and thou shalt bee saved. Repent, and thy sins shall bee forgiven thee.

2. Or such as are made and performed in meer Mercy, such wherein God promises to give that condition which hee requires to the Promise.

Wee have not only promises of giving pardon, and remission to the beleeving sinner: but wee have promises of bestowing Faith upon the unbelieving sinner.

There are some Promises wherein wee are to bring Faith to the Promise. As here, *whoever beleeves shall bee saved*. And

There are some Promises that wee must go unto for Faith. Some that wee must bring Faith to, and some that wee must go to for Faith: as those free and absolute Promises -- *I will take away your stony hearts, and give you hearts of flesh*.

And such wherein hee hath said, *Hee will work all our works in us, and for us*.

Oh! say some, If I had but so much Repentance, so much brokenness of heart, if but so much love, then I could beleeve. Alas! wee must not bring our penny to the Promise. We must beleeve, and then all the rest will come in. The way to have a broken heart, is to beleeve. The way to repent, the way to love God.

2. The second Ordinance is Prayer. Though none of this Faith bee in Heaven; yet all Faith comes from Heaven, -- *It is the gift of God*. And therefore wee are to seek to him for it.

Wee

Wee may joyn our selves to *Faith-begetting-means*; But it is God that must make the means effectual, for the working of *Faith*.

It is a grace above the power of man; and therefore requires the power of God to work it. I say

1. *It requires the Power of God.* Nay, not only the Power; but

2. *It requires the greatness of his Power.* Nay

3. *The excess of greatness of his Power.* Nay

4. *The mightiness of that excess.* Yea and

5. *The working of all this mighty Power.* As the Apostle shews, *Ephes. 1. 19.* where wee have all those five particulars set down.

And therefore there is need of calling in for all the help of God, all the power of God for the working of it.

It is the hardest thing in the World to cast a man out of himself: to cut a man off his own stock: to throw a man off his own foundation.

And when that is done, it is as hard a work to bring this man over to *Christ*: to make a man to lye full and flat upon the promise of Grace, for mercy.

And therefore how much need is there of stirring up our hearts? How much need of calling in for the strength of God by prayer?

This is the second. Prayer is a fruit of *Faith*, and yet prayer is a means for the begetting of *Faith*. As the Spirit is a fruit of Prayer, so prayer is a fruit of the Spirit. As you see, *Luk. 11. 13.* compared with *Rom. 8. 15.* In the one place the Spirit is said to be the fruit of Prayer. -- *Hee will give his Spirit to them that ask him.* In the other, Prayer is the fruit of the Spirit. -- *You have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby you cry abba, Father.*

3. Have much to do with *Faith-begetting-Company*; *Faith-begetting-conference*: Where thou shalt hear the discoveries, how God hath wrought *Faith* in them; and how God doth work *Faith* in the hearts of unbelieving men. -- *Did not our hearts burn within us, when hee talked with us, by the way? and when hee opened to us the Scriptures?* said those two Disciples after their conference with *Christ*, travelling in company together to *Emmaus*; *Luk. 24. 32.* The like of *Aquila* and *Priscilla* with *Apollo*; *Act. 18. 26.*

4. Dwel much upon, and cherish *Faith-begetting-considerations*; which are

1. *Thoughts of our selves.*

2. *Thoughts of God.*

Thoughts of our emptiness, and thoughts of Gods fullness. Considerations of our own misery, and thoughts of his love and mercy.

Think how God hath dealt with you, and how God hath dealt with other sinners, who have come to him. Such were *Manasses*, *Mary*, *Paul*; -- *Wee all run after thee, O Lord, seeing thou despisest*

Omnes post te
currimus, au-
dientes, quod
nullum spernis
peccatorem.
Bernard.

Et si his peccatoribus veniam dedisti, paratus es & nobis, si modo impetramur.

"no sinners. Thou despisedst not the weeping Mary, the begging Canaanite, the intreating Publican, the confessing Thief, the Adulterous Woman, the denying Disciple, the persecuting Paul. And if thou refusedst not those, thou wilt not reject mee. If thou pardonest them, thou wilt pardon mee, if I believe in thee.

But in particular, cherish these three thoughts.

1. The consideration of thy own vileness, and emptiness; thy sin, and misery by reason of sin. And this will drive thee out of thy self.

2. The consideration of the fulness, riches, and al-sufficiency of *Christ*: who hath all fulness in him; who is able to save to the utmost: a bottome able to hold up any weight of sin.

3. The consideration of the freeness of *Christ*, and the Promise. God keeps open house; invites, intreats, beseecheth us to beleeve and come in. -- Ho! Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, come buy ye that have no silver, and eat. Come buy Wine and Milk without money, &c. Isa. 55. 1. And -- Hee that comes to mee (saith *Christ*, Joh. 6. 37.) I will by no means cast out. -- Let him that will come, whoever hath a mind, let him come. Bee his sins what they will bee for nature, for number, for continuance: yet come and finde acceptance. -- Who is a God like unto thee! That pardonest iniquity, and passest by the transgressions of the Remnant of thy heritage! Thou reteste not anger for ever, for thou delightest to shew mercy, Mic. 7. 18!

There are two things when men are humbled, which keep them off from beleeving, either,

1. A doubt of Gods Power -- Lord if thou canst.

2. A doubt of his Will. -- Lord, if thou wilt.

1. Some doubt of his Power. Oh! Is God able to pardon such a sinner as I have been? Can hee pardon so great, so bloody, so crimson sins? If they were but such, or such, I should not doubt. But being so great: how can God pardon!

2. Others doubt of his Will. They will bee ready to say. They know there is a fulness of Power in God: hee is able to forgive my sins, let them bee what they will bee: hee hath a Sea of Mercy, able to drown Mountains as well as Mole-hills. But alas! I doubt of his Will: whether hee will shew mercy to such a sinner.

And therefore, if ever you would beleeve, you must get an heart convinced of the 1. Fulness and al-sufficiency of *Christ* to pardon. 2. And of the freeness and willingness of *Christ* to shew mercy, to such as do beleeve.

Dwell upon such considerations as these are, being means to beget Faith. When men are once convinced of the fulness of God, they will come over to him, if withall they bee fully convinced of their own need.

It is possible for a man to beleeve this fulness in *Christ*, and yet not

not bee able to clear his acceptance. Wee read of the Lepers, who seeing nothing but death in their condition; 2 *King.* 7. 3, 4. resolved not to stay there, but to go over to the Camp of the *Assyrians*. -- *If they save us alive (say they) wee shall live: and if they kill us, wee can but dye.* And there were many reasons, which might cause them to expect no better, but death from them.

1. They were Jews, and so their enemies.
2. They might bee suspected for Spies.
3. If not: yet they were *Lepers, good for no service*: such as might infect the whole Camp. Yet seeing their Misery, in want of bread, and knowing that there was bread to bee had: they resolved to adventure.

So, if there were but a through discovery

1. *Of our own Misery*, a conviction of that.
2. *Of the fulness and all-sufficiency of Christ*; it were possible so far to prevail with a man, as to throw himself on *Christ*, though hee bee not yet able to clear, whether God will ever accept him.

But when wee take that other consideration in, and do think of the *sweetness, and freeness of Gods love and mercy to accept of poor returning sinners*: what should then hinder, but the soul should come over, and beleeve in him? And therefore, if ever thou wouldest have *Faith*, cherish these thoughts, dwell much upon such considerations as these.

Men say, they would beleeve; but in the mean time, they never cherish such thoughts and considerations as may beget *Faith*.

If there bee any thing in the Word which makes against them; this they will harbor and cherish: they will feed upon the *Worm-wood*, and the *Gall*: but if there bee any thing to nourish and cherish *Faith*, this they will suppress.

They have an ear open to hear what the Law, what sin, what Satan saith: but none to hear what God saith in the Promise.

They will promote the Devils cause, his arguments, sharpen his weapons against themselves: But they will silence the pleadings of Gods Spirit in them.

They will look upon the dark side of the Cloud, not the light side. The threatnings of the Law, they will apply, and set on with all their might: But if Promises come they finde no acceptance with them.

They will nourish considerations of their sins, their guilt, their misery, by reason of sin, and aggravate it to the utmost: but the thoughts of Gods Love, of the freeness of his Mercy, of the promises of pardoning sins, these they reject.

My Brethren, This is not the way to get *Faith*. If ever you would beleeve, you must study the freeness of Gods Mercy in *Christ*; his willingness to pardon and forgive poor sinners, if they come over to him.

2. The second means for the strengthening of *Faith* are these.

A a

1. Make

1. *Make use of the Ordinances.*1. *The Word.*2. *The Sacraments.*3. *Prayer.*

Corpora naturalia, eodem modo, quo generantur, nutriuntur.

1. *The Word.* Wee say: *The same way things are begotten, the same way they are nourished.* Faith is begotten by the Word: and Faith is nourished by the Word. It is both the Begetter, and the Nourisher: both the Breeder and the Feeder of Faith, Rom. 15.

4. 1 Joh. 4.

2. *The Sacraments*, which were instituted and set up for this end, to *increase your Faith.* God knew hee had to deal with [unbelieving persons; and therefore hee doth not only give the *Promise, his Covenant, and Oath*, for the confirmation of us: but to all these hee annexed his Seal, the Sacraments: *Mountains upon Mountains, to confirm us.*

A man would not desire so much of any honest man, as God hath here condescended to, for the confirmation of our Faith.

One would have thought his bare word had been enough, considering the Truth, and sufficiency of the Person, that spake it.

But hee hath given his Oath. Nay, but hee rested not there: but his Seal too: The Sacraments. And therefore make use of them.

3. Bee much in Prayer, that God would strengthen and increase thy Faith. Prayer is the fuel of Faith, the food of Faith.

A man may as well live without meat, as Faith without Prayer. As the soul lives by Faith: so Faith lives by Prayer. Faith helps Prayer, and Prayer helps Faith again.

As there is a Communion among the Ordinances, every Ordinance doth help another. The Word helps Prayer, and Prayer helps the Word: So there's a Communion between Ordinances and Graces. Faith helps Prayer, and Prayer helps Faith. Prayer cannot say of Faith -- *I have no need of thee*: nor Faith of Prayer -- *What need have I of thee?*

As there is a mutual dependence of one Christian on another, a means to nourish Communion, as Christians help one another; One may say -- *Help my Zeal, and I will increase thy knowledge; strengthen my Faith, and I will inflame or kindle thy affections*: so here, There is a mutual dependence between Faith and Prayer. Faith saith to Prayer, *Help mee to beleeve*, and *I will help thee to pray*: And Prayer to Faith, *Help mee to pray*, and *I will help thee to beleeve*.

Such a Communion there is. And therefore bee much in prayer for strength.

4. Live much in the Heaven of the Promise. Feed upon the freeness, and sweetness, and fatness of the Promise. Delight your selves in fatness. Let your way lye much above; live much out of

of your selves. This is your way. A man shall never bee able to strengthen *Faith*, that lives in himself.

5. *Walk in the Earth of the Law.* As *Faith* strengthens Obedience: so Obedience strengthens *Faith*. As *Faith* multiplies, so let duty multiply. The way to nourish the one, is the way to increase the other.

6. *Make it your chief riches, to bee rich in Faith.* And then all your designs and indeavours will bee for the increase of it. The worldly man labours, toils, sweats here for the World: And what is the reason? but because hee makes this his riches, so it is here.

7. *Exercise Faith much.* And this is the way to increase it. Men that can employ a greater measure of *Faith*, shall have it. Bee careful that the exercises of *Faith* may bee proportionable to the measure of *Faith* received. It is the way to get it increased.

God will not have the stock lye dead in our hands. Hee will not give more than wee can employ. The Talents were according to their severall abilities. Some had two, some one, some five. When God sees a man of great layings out, hee laies in more still.

Exercise Grace. For within the compass of the exercise of Grace, lies that which will nourish and increase Grace.

8. *Treasure up sound Evidences of Faith.* The stronger our Evidences, the stronger our *Faith*. And therefore store up sound Evidences.

One fallhood among thy Evidences staggers thy *Faith*.

9. *Be thankful for the measure thou already hast.* Thankfulness is a Grace big with Mercy.

Men are often injurious to the increase of *Faith* by unthankfulness, for that measure they have. Wee are too much like covetous men, looking after further degrees so much, as to overlook that which God hath already bestowed. Our complaints would bee others contents: others would bee glad of them.

Therefore let us get an heart enlarged for the measure wee have. It is the way for God to enlarge his hand, to bestow more upon us.

10. *Maintain Humility, an humble spirit.* God gives Grace, and hee gives increase of Grace to the humble. Humility is the Nurse of Grace. The empty heart shall bee filled. Nature abhors emptiness, Grace much more.

11. *Be much in acquaintance with God.* Know more of his mind, more of his heart. Read him as hee hath discovered himself in the Word, in his *Christ*.

12. *Gather and lay up Faith-strengthening Experiences.* Keep a Catalogue of holy Experiences of Gods Love and goodness to thee. All these are fuel to nourish and strengthen *Faith*.

And now having done with the Doctrine of *Faith*, I must conclude

This upon oc-
casion of a col-
lection for the
Poor.

clude with a Doctrine of works. Wherein I shall desire your pra-
ctice of it, as soon as I have done the preaching of it.

It is very orderly, that works should follow Faith. Your works
of Charity, our Doctrine of Faith.

The Papists do charge us that wee cry down works, and preach
nothing but Faith, Faith, making it *Titulum, sine Re.*

I hope it will bee seen at this time, that preaching Faith *Forma-
liser.* I preach works *Eminentèr.*

And I could not possibly have taken up a better ground for
works, than to preach the Doctrine of Faith first.

Indeed wee preach Faith without works in *Justificationem*, as
touching Justification. But wee say, Faith and works must go to-
gether in our conversation.

As Faith doth Justifie our Persons: so works do justifie our
Faith. And thus Abraham was justified by works: his works de-
clared him to bee just.

τὸ πνεῦμα.

Good works are the breath of Faith, as the word in *James* sig-
nifies. And as the body without breath is dead: so Faith without
works is dead also.

Good works are the fruit of Faith: the Children and Issue of
Faith. As Rachel said, Give mee Children, else I dye: so Faith.
Give mee Children: give mee works, else I dye: otherwise I
have not a living, but a dead Faith.

So you see, wee set up works too, though wee cry them down
in the matter of Justification.

Are good works good for nothing, because not good to justify?
The Sun is not good to give light to blind men. Is it therefore
good for nothing? Gold is not good to assuage hunger. Is it
therefore of no use?

Wee say works are necessary,

1. In respect of God.

2. In respect of our selves.

3. In respect of others.

1. In respect of God.

1. To shew our Obedience.

2. To glorifie his Name.

3. To testifie our Thankfulness.

4. To beautifie his Gospel.

2. In respect of our selves.

1. To make our Calling and Election sure.

2. To declare our Sincerity.

3. To procure Mercy.

3. In respect of others.

1. To refresh the Bowels of the Saints.

2. For example of Vertues.

3. To stop the mouths of wicked men, who would else take
occasion to blaspheme the Gospel: and speak evil of Profession.

4. To

4. To winne others; to gain enemies to the embracing of the Truth.

And therefore seeing good works are thus necessary: bee you stirred up to so concerning a duty. The Apostle saith --- *Whiles you have opportunity to do good, do good to all men.* Here is now an opportunity: Take it. God honours thee, if hee give thee an heart to do such a good work. *Your Bounty is your Honour.*

A

4. To winne others to gain enemies to the embracing of the Truth.

And therefore seeing good works are thus necessary: see you stirred up to so concerning a duty. The Apostle saith --- Where you have opportunity to do good, do good to all men. Here is now an opportunity: Take it. God honours thee, if hee give thee an heart to do such a good work. Your Honour is your Honour.

A
TREATISE
OF THE
Slownesse of Heart
TO
BELEEVE.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
And MASTER of C.C.C.



LONDON:
Printed by Robert Ibbisſon, for Thomas Parkbuſh, and
are to be ſold at his Shop over againſt the Great
Conduit in Cheapſide, 1656.

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LONDON:
Printed by Robert Ibbison, for Thomas Parkhurst,
are to be sold at his Shop over against the Queen
Conduit in Cheapside, 1676.

the discovery of Christ to him, and to take away this blindness
in the latter part of the 45. vers. And see.

TREATISE

OF THE SLOWNESSE OF HEART

TO BELIEVE

JOHN 1. 50.

Jesus answered and said unto him, because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.



In the latter part of this Chapter wee see, that goodness is of a diffusive and spreading nature. If thou bee good, thou wilt desire and endeavour to make others good: when Christ hath once revealed himself to any soul, it will bee very studious to make him known to others. So *vers. 35. 36.* you read, that God having revealed Christ to *John*, hee makes him known to his Disciples, one of whom was *Andrew*, *vers. 40.* hee could not conceal the good news, but makes it known to his Brother *Peter*, *vers. 41.* Afterward Christ reveals himself to *Philip*, *vers. 43.* and upon it *Philip* makes him known to *Nathaniel*, *vers. 45.* so communicative and diffusive is goodness, like the liquid Elements of Air and Water, which cannot bee kept in their own bounds and limits.

From the forty fifth verse, to the end of this Chapter, there is contained a discourse 1. Between *Philip* and *Nathaniel*. And then 2. Between Christ and *Nathaniel*. The first between *Philip* and *Nathaniel*, is from the 45. to the 47. verse, where you have

B b

1. *Philips*

1. Philips discovery of Christ to him, *vers. 45. we have found him of whom Moses and the Prophets did write.*

2. Nathaniels harsh entertainment of it, *vers. 46. can any good thing come out, &c.*

3. Philips care to resolve him, and to take away this prejudice, in the latter part of the 46. *verse, come and see.*

4. Nathaniels desire to be satisfied: hee goeth out with him, and that is the summe of the discourse between Philip and Nathaniel.

The second discourse is between Christ and Nathaniel, from *vers. 47. ad finem.* In which you have five things observeable.

1. Christs profession, or commendation of him, *vers. 47. Jesus saw Nathaniel comming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*

2. Nathaniels reply, *ver. 48. Whence knowest thou mee?* which may be construed two ways.

1. Either by way of question, being convinced that hee spake right, and that hee discovered his heart to him, hee demands how it came to pass, that hee knew his spirit so right, as though hee had said, it is true, I desire to walk uprightly and sincerely with God, but how canst thou tell that? how is this discovered to thee? art thou able to judge of the heart? none knoweth that but God only.

2. Or the words may be conceived as a blunt and more rude reply, *whence knowest thou mee?* you never saw mee before, nor I you, and how then can you give so high a commendation of one you are no more acquainted with?

And I take them in this last sense, because hee came with such a prejudice against Christ, *ver. 40.*

3. Christs further and clearer manifestation of himself to him, *vers. 48. Jesus answered, before Philip called thee under the Fig-tree I saw thee,* as though hee had said, I there saw enough to discothy sincerity. I saw what there thou didst, or because I saw thee, when thou thoughtest none did, thou mayest well think I know thy heart.

4. Nathaniels noble confession or profession of Christ, *vers. 49. Nathaniel said Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.*

5. We have Christs commendation of this act of his Faith, *v. 50. Jesus answered, because I said I saw thee under the Fig-tree, beleevest thou?* with a promise of future and fuller revelation, *thou shalt see greater things than these.*

Here you see that Christ passeth by his failings, which were

1. His prejudice against Christ, because of the place, *can any good thing, &c.*

2. His rude reply to Christ, when he discovered himself to him, *whence knowest thou mee,* these Christ passeth by, and falls into the com-

commendation of his present act of Faith.

So gracious a Saviour wee have, that when wee present him with our duties, hee will not remember our infirmities. Hee saith, *I will remember your sins no more*, viz. to object them against us, to upbraid, much less to condemn us for them. Hee did not object against *Manasseh*, his witchcrafts and idolatries, nor against *David*, his Murder and Adultery, nor against *Matthew*, that hee had been a Publican, and an Oppressor, nor against *Zachens*, that hee had been an Extortioner, nor against *Mary Magdalen*, that shee had been an Adulteresse, nor here against *Nathaniel* his behaviour towards him, when once the soul comes in, hee receives it, and remembers its sins no more, but hides and covers them.

In the Text observe three general parts.

1. An open commendation of *Nathaniels* Faith, *because I said*, &c.

2. A silent reprehension of others unbelief. *Believeest thou?*

3. A gracious promise of future and fuller Revelation, *thou shalt see greater*, &c.

In the first consider,

1. The Person commending, *Christ*.

2. The Person commended, *Nathaniel*.

3. The thing for what, his readiness to believe.

4. The ground of his Faith, *because I said, I saw thee under the Fig-tree*, believeest thou? as if hee had said, doth so small a thing induce thee to believe, I have wrought no miracles, raised no dead, &c. I shall do greater things in the sight of others, heal the sick, give sight to the blinde, cleanse the Lepers, cast out Devils, raise the dead; and yet many of them will not believe.

For the promise of fuller Revelation, the words are, *thou shalt see greater things than these*: which is promised,

Either as a reward of his former Faith, or for the increase of his present Faith, and in these words hee points at what after miracles hee would do. Thus you see the parts of the Text laid open to you; but there is one thing yet which is necessarily to be unfolded in the Text, before wee leave the general view of it, which is the ground of his believing, which was *Christs* saying, *that hee saw him under the Fig-tree*. The question is

Quest. How so small a thing as this, saying, *that hee saw him under the Fig-tree*, could be likely to produce so noble a confession and profession of *Christ*, or make him so believe?

Ans. Wee will not now speak of *Gods* working by it, for so wee know nothing is so small, but by his working in, and by it, may prove admirably efficacious, as on the contrary, if hee work not, no thing, though never so great otherwise, and seemingly promising, will be able to do any thing, as wee see in the Jews, who although they saw his miracles, such as none but a *God* could do, yet they believed not.

Wee will consider the thing in it self, and so I finde these two things in it, which might draw out such a confession, and make him put forth such an act of Faith. *Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the Fig-tree.*

1. It may bee hee was then taken up with the meditation of the *Messiah*, who was to come; for at this time their thoughts were all full of it, *Luk. 2. 25. 48.* and so God might now suggest to him, that hee would reveal him to him.

2. Or it may bee out of evidence and conviction of the omnipresence of Christ; that hee could see him under the Fig-tree. *Nathaniel* thought that hee had been alone, and no eye had seen him; and therefore when such an evidence was brought to his spirit, that Christ saw him, yea, not only his person, and outward actions, but his heart also, hee was thereupon convinced of the divinity of Christ, and so cryeth out, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, &c.*

Quest. 2. But you will say, *How did this discover that Christ was the Son of God, or the divinity of Christ?*

Ans. Hee knew that corporally hee was not there, and therefore although his eyes told him, that Christ was a man, yet in that when absent, hee could see him under the Fig-tree, it did discover and declare him to bee God. But

2. I think this speech of Christ, which was the ground of *Nathaniel's* Faith, had not only relation to his seeing of *Nathaniel's* person; but to some special peece of service which *Nathaniel* was then upon. Either meditation, prayer, or the like, which Christ saw, and his heart in it, as if Christ had said, *I saw not only thy person under the Fig-tree, but also the workings of thy spirit there, I saw in them the uprightness and sincerity of thy heart, and the goings out of thy soul, when thou wert there alone; which brought such a conviction of the divinity of Christ with it, that it made him cry out, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel, thou who knowest the heart must needs bee God, &c.* as if a man should say to his friend, thou art one that art charitable, mournest for thy sin, and in case hee should answer, but how know you that? hee should reply, did I not see such an act of charity which you did? did I not see you mourn bitterly for sin at such a time, &c? this in some resemblance commeth somewhat near to this instance, but yet falleth short, because wee judge of the outward act, Christ here of the inward, which manifested him to bee God omniscient, the searcher of the heart, &c.

Thus I have shewed you the coherence with the parts of the Text, and have in part unfolded what might seem difficult and obscure in it.

Now there are some Doctrines which lye about the verge of the Text, some from the person commending, some from the person commended, and some from the thing, for which. But I shall

touch only upon those which arise from the main scope of the Text; and they are two.

Doct. 1. *That the eyes of Christ run through the whole World, and behold the evil and the good.*

Hee that saw *Nathaniel* under the Fig-tree, seeth thee in all places, in all companies, &c. to this purpose read *Psalm* 139. *Amos* 9. 2, 3, 4. Hee is *totus oculus*, all eye, to see, and all hand to feel and finde out. Hee who is to bee Judge of all the actions, and waies of men, must necessarily know them all.

Use 1. Say not then, that God sees not, say not that darkness shall cover thee, *esto quod nemo, non tamen nullus*, though no man, yet some eye seeth thee.

Use 2. This may bee comfort to the Saints. Christ sees you under the Fig-tree, sees you in a corner, sees your persons, your actions, your spirits: Hee sees your prayers, hee sees your tears, hee sees your afflictions, your pressures, *Exod.* 3. 7. *Hee hears your groans, &c.*

Use 3. This is terror to wicked men, hee sees them too; hee sees your malice against his Saints, your vileness and abominable filthiness. I saw you in such a place, at such a time, in such and such pollutions, in which thou wouldest have been loath, in which thou would have been confounded, if men should then have seen thee.

From the commendation of *Nathaniels* Faith. Observe,

Doct. 2. *That such is the goodness of God, that hee commends us for that which is his own.*

Hee commends *Nathaniel* here for that Grace which hee had given him. God works graces in us, and then commends us for them: hee gives us mony, and then commends us for our riches, hee makes us beautifull, and then commends us for our beauty, in which hee doth only beautifie his own beautie, and love his own graces in us. Hee doth here commend *Nathaniels* Faith, which yet was only the Faith of his own powerfull working. Hee commends *David* for his uprightness, *Hezekiah* for his perfectness, *Moses* for his meekness, *Cornelius* for his devotion, the Publican for his compunction, the poor Widdow for her liberality, and the Woman of *Canaan* for her Faith and importunity; all which was only the work of his own Grace in them. God will finde matter of love and liking in us, from that which is his own, hee can pass by ours, and own his. As a Father loveth his child for that which is of his own nature in him, and so doth God in us.

Use 1. Then see what a sweet Saviour wee have, who will pass by our imperfections and deformities, and take notice of his own beauties in us.

Use 2. And accordingly wee should learn to look upon our selves, as Christ doth, though black in our selves, yet beautiful in Christ, although I would have you to own, and to blush at your

own

own detinities; yet not so as to blinde your eyes from beholding Christs excellencies, as in himself, so in you by his grace, take the shame of your own sins. But let God have the honour of his own Graces, by this you shall nourish your humility; and yet not weaken your Faith, you shall abhor your selves, and yet extoll Gods free Grace.

But these are but by the way, to which many others might be added. I will fall upon those which the Text doth more fully hold out, and they are these.

1. *That slowness of Heart to beleeve*, is a temper of spirit very offensive to God; this is hinted in the implied tacit reprehension of others, whilst hee so commends *Nathaniels* forwardness.

2. That God takes it well at our hands, or it is very pleasing unto God, when wee will beleeve in him upon small Revelation.

3. That God will reveal great things to them, who do so beleeve in him. *Thou shalt see greater things than these*, it is a promise of future and fuller manifestation to be vouchsafed to him.

Wee shall begin with the first, which is

Doct. *That slowness of heart to beleeve, is a temper of spirit very offensive unto God.*

I need not stand long to clear the truth of this Doctrin, if you look into *Joh. 1. 50.* that high commendation of *Nathaniels* Faith, is a fluent upbraiding of others for their *slowness of heart to beleeve*. *Because I said, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, beleevest thou?* It is as if hee had said, for that without question is implied; why I have done greater things in the sight of others. *I have healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blinde, raised the dead, cast out Devils, and yet they have not beleeved.* And doth so small a manifestation work on thee. *Because I said, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, &c.* I have not raised thee from the dead: implying hee had done it to others. And hence hee is said to upbraid those Cities wherein his mighty works had been done, because *they beleeved not*, *Mar. 16. 14.*

And this was a great aggravation of their sin, where so much had been done to perswade them to beleeve, yet slow, &c.

The like in *Joh. 12. 37, 38.* *But though hee had done so many miracles before them, yet they beleeved not on him, that the saying of Esaiab might be fulfilled, who hath beleeved? here was a great aggravation of their sin.*

And upon this ground hee reproveth his Disciples, *Luk. 24. 25, 26.* *Oh fools and slow of heart to beleeve all that the Prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory, &c?*

And how often doth hee upon the same ground rebuke his Disciples: *O yee of little Faith!* *Mar. 9. 19.* *O faithless Generation how long shall I beo with you? how long shall I suffer you?* Implying, it put Christ to the utmost of his patience to bear with them in their unbelief.

Which

Which yet if you read the story, you will finde it was no small work, it was because they could not cast out the dumb spirit out of a man possessed; which yet hee himself tells them afterward, *vers. 29*, that this was the greatest of difficulties: this kinde came forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting, which shews the work was of more than ordinary difficulty: yet because their Faith was posed in it, hee tells them they were a faithless Generation, and hee was weary of them, it put him to the utmost exercise of his patience to bear with them.

And you see the like of *Peter*, whose Faith was so great, as to carry him upon the waters, to walk upon the waves, upon a bare command and word of Christ, yet afterwards the wind growing strong, and corruption working, hee was affraid, and begins to sink, and then cryed, *Lord, save mee*, *Mat. 14. 30, 31*. And how much was Christ displeased at him, who had put forth so glorious an act of Faith, as to walk upon the waters upon a bare command, yet because hee held not out, Christ reprov'd him, *Oh thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt!* was this a little Faith? &c.

But wee will pass this, and in the prosecution of this Doctrin, wee will shew these eight things.

1. *That wee are slow of heart to believe.*
2. *What are the grounds that wee are slow of heart to believe?*
3. *What are the reasons why this slowness of heart is so offensive to God?*

For the first, *that wee are slow of heart to believe.*

This will bee demonstrated to you, if you consider with mee these five particulars.

1. The greatness of that power which God doth put forth, in the working Faith in an unbelieving heart.

Faith it self is called the work of Gods power, nay, of his almighty power. The same power which God put forth in the raising of Christ from the dead, even the same power hee doth put forth in the working of Faith in an unbelieving heart, *Ephes. i. 19, 20*.

There are many mighty works of God, which are not saving works. As the works of Creation, the works of Providence: These are mighty works, but they are not saving works,

But there are no saving works of God which are not mighty.

Every work of mercy, is a work of might too, every work of grace, is a work of power too, though every work of power bee not a work of grace, yet every work of grace, is a work of power, And the work of an almighty power. *Alfus omnipotens. Alfus omnipotentia.*

Not only an Almighty God doth work, but also according to the Almightyness of God, when hee works Faith and Grace in a graceless heart. There are two names given to this in Scripture, both which speak the greatness of Gods power in the working of it.

1. It is called a resurrection from death to life; not of a dead body, but a dead soul, *Psalm 88. 10. wilt thou shew wonders to the dead, shall the dead arise to praise thee?* hee speaks not there of a natural death, but of the condition which hee was in, lying for the present slain and dead as it were, under the apprehensions of Gods wrath. Shall a soul that now lyes dead and slain with the apprehensions of thy wrath and displeasure, arise by Faith to praise thee? *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise to praise thee?* That is, wilt thou shew the greatnes of thy power in working Faith in an unbelieving soul; this is no less than a resurrection from the dead, the dead arise, &c. And therefore this must needs require the greatnes of Gods power to effect it.

It is a great work to recover a sick man, but more to restore a dying man; but to raise a dead man to life; this is the work of God only. Yet all this is nothing to the resurrection of a dead soul.

To raise our bodies when consumed by fire, when vanished into air, when corrupted in the water, when turned into dust and rottenness, is not so great a work, as to raise a dead soul, a soul dead in sin, to work Faith in an unbelieving heart.

This is the Almighty work of God.

2. And hence, Secondly, It is called a work of Creation, *2 Cor. 5. 17.* thus in Christ.

And you know Creation is the work of God only, it is the production of something out of nothing. Men may produce something out of something, but to produce something out of nothing is proper to God alone. There is lesse distance between the least dust, and the most glorious Angel in Heaven, than there is between it and nothing.

Wee say, and its true, *inter ens, & non ens, nulla proportio*, there is infinite distance between something and nothing. Such a distance as none but a God can bring together. Now this work of Faith and Grace in the heart in an unregenerate and unbelieving man, is a new Creation. A Creation of light in a dark heart, of life in a dead heart, of Faith in an unbelieving heart, of Grace, in a graceless heart, which is a work which requires the almightiness of Gods power for the effecting of it. And that is the first demonstration.

2. If you do consider the complaints of Beleevers, when they first come to beleve.

What sighs, what tears, what groans, what pains, what strugglings, with unbelieve, with doubts, with tears. Crying out with the man in the Gospel. *Lord I do beleve, help my unbelieve.* It may bee now the doubt of Gods power, of Christs al-sufficiency to pardon sin, to forgive so great and hainous wickednesse, and say with him, *Lord, if thou canst do any thing, help.* Mark 9. 22. or it not so, yet they doubt of his will, whether God will pardon them, yea, or no, and say with another in the Gospel, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou*

thou canst make mee clean. Matth. 8. 2.

Every dayes experience tells us, how hard a thing it is to cast a man out of himself, and when that is done, Oh how hard a thing is it to bring that soul over to Christ, and the promise! Now a thousand objections are raised; the soul is now as full of scruples, of doubts, as the Sun is full of moles.

Oh what swarms of unbelieving thoughts! what multitudes of doubts, and objections, that it is beyond the power of any, but of him alone that can deal with the heart, either to discover them, or answer them, or if answered, yet the soul is still unsettled, till God come in. This is plain in cast down and humbled souls.

3. If you look upon the Rhetorick, God useth to bring a poor humbled and cast down sinner to believe. Read *Isa. 40.* beginning. *Comfort you, comfort yee my people, saith my God. Speak yee comfortably.* Say, your warfare is accomplished, your iniquities are pardoned, &c. But least any should say, alas, tell not mee of this! no comfort belongs to mee; hee is buried up in troubles; God doth not regard him: why see how hee saith in *vers. 27.* *Why sayest thou Oh Jacob, and speakest Oh Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my Judgement is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary? hee giveth power to the faint, &c.*

Do you doubt of his power? why hee is the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, and hee can pardon, &c.

What though thy sins bee great, yet hee tells thee, *hee will abundantly pardon, Isa. 55. 7, 8, 9.* *Let the wicked man forsake his wayes, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and hee will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for hee will abundantly pardon;* the word is, multiply to pardon, as thou hast to sin.

But you will say, how can this bee? this is far above the thoughts of a Creature. Why but saith hee in the next verse, *My thoughts are not as your thoughts, neither are your waies my wayes, saith the Lord, for as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are my wayes higher than your wayes, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* But alas! there are such and such conditions required. Why but saith hee, *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come, Revel. 22: 17.*

Do you doubt of his will? Why hee tells you: *It is not the will of your heavenly Father, that any of these little ones should perish,* Matth. 18. 14. You think it is, but Christ saith it is not; hee knows the thoughts hee thinks to thee, they are thoughts of peace, and not of evill, &c. *Fer. 29. 11.*

And how doth hee say. As I live, I do not delight in the death of him that dyes, turn you, turn you, and live, Oh why will yee dye! *Ezek. 18. 31, 32.*

And God would have all men saved by comming to the Knowledge, &c. 1 *Tim.* 2. 4.

Yea but this Covenant is not firm, I may sin away mine own mercy. See what God saith, *Isa.* 54. 10. *the Mountains shall depart, and the hills shall bee removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace bee removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* It is more firm than the Covenant of the day and night, *Fer.* 33. 20, 21. *can a Woman forget her sucking child, that shee should not have compassion on the Son of her womb: yea they may forget, yet will not I forget thee; Isa.* 49. 15.

This with abundance such like Rhetorick God useth to draw a poor humbled doubting sinner to beleeeve, and why should God use such Rhetorick to perswade with men, if it were so easy a matter, as men make it to beleeeve?

This shews the difficulty of Faith.

4. If you consider the way that God takes to confirm the Covenant of mercy, and pardon to Beleevers.

Hee gives you his Promise, his Oath, his Seal; heaps Mountains upon Mountains, and all to confirm it; hee layes Heaven and Earth at stake, nay hee pawns his Truth, his very being, and all, to perswade with unbelieving men to beleeeve.

God needed not to do this in respect of himself, his purpose was as good as his promise, his Promise as good as his oath, his oath as firm as his seal: hee needed not to do this in respect of himself; as if that his oath would binde him more than his promise.

But God hath done this in respect of us, to strengthen our Faith, that wee might bee stedfast in God, when wee stagger in our selves, that wee might bee strong in God, when weak in our selves. As the Apostle in *Heb.* 6. 16, 17, 18. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, &c. God hath thus condescended to all this, to beget Faith in unbelievers, that if his promise would not perswade with you, then his oath, if not that, yet his seal: The great Seal of Heaven.

You could not desire more of the most faithles and dishonest man in the World, than God hath condescended to, who is yet the faithfull and unchangeable God. You have a Promise, will not that do? you would have an Oath, will not that do? you have a Seal, witness, all.

And what doth all this, but plainly demonstrate the greatness of the difficulty to beleeeve? Wee say, it is in vain to do that by more, which may bee as well done by lesse. If Promise would have done it, the Oath added had been in vain, but shall wee think that any thing of this was in vain? that wee cannot.

And was all this then required? would no lesse serve the turne? Tell mee then whether this do not fully enough demonstrate the difficulty of Faith?

Thou that thinkest Faith so easy, thou that never found the diffi-

Vz nobis sine
juranti Deo
tredimus.

Frustra fit per
plura quod fieri
potest per pau-
ciora.

Entia non sunt
multiplicanda
sine necessita-
te.

difficulty of it, mayest well think thou hast no Faith. In this God shews the difficulty of beleeving, that his Promise, his Oath, &c. are all ingaged to work and confirm it.

5. If you consider the complaint of the Preacher. You hear *Isaiah* complaining, *Isa. 53. 1. Who hath beleeved our report? or our Doctrin*, as the word *נִשְׁמָע* may import. *And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

And *Christ* complains of the same, *Joh. 12. 37, 38. Though hee had done so many miracles before them, yet they beleeved not on him, that the saying of the Prophet might be fulfilled. viz. who hath beleeved our report?*

And *Paul* hee takes up the same complaint, as you see at large, *Rom. 10. 16, 17, 18, &c.*

And wee our selves may take up the same complaint. *Wee have spent our strength in vain, and our labour for nought.*

Though wee have declared the wonderfull things of the Gospel, the freeness, vastness, greatness of the love of *Christ*, the preciousness of Promises, yet men beleeve not. Oh that I could not complain of those, &c! how many offers of *Christ* have you had? how many tenders of mercy?

How often hath *Christ* unbowel'd himself to your souls in the Promise! how often hath God invited, intreated, beseeched, called, *Hoe every one that thirsteth come!*

But yet senselesse people do not thirst, and thirsty people do not come, &c. Oh! here is enough to demonstrate that wee are *slow of heart to beleeve.*

2. Wee come to the second. What are the grounds, &c.

And wee will reduce them to these three general heads.

1. There are some grounds from Satan.

2. Some from our selves.

3. Some which are taken from others, which do foreflow the heart from beleeving in the Promise.

You must know, I speak of men awakened, and convinced of their miserable condition, not such as go on with a high hand in their sins. I speak of men humbled.

1. Then the reasons, or grounds why wee are so slow, &c. From Satan, are the delusions and false suggestions of Satan.

You must know there are two main stratagems which hold up Satans Kingdome in the World,

1. Is to keep presumptuous sinners from being humbled.

2. The other is to keep humbled sinners from beleeving.

The first of these is by keeping of presumptuous sinners from being humbled, which hee doth these wayes.

1. Either by perswading them they are no sins they live in, and here hee tells the Prodigall hee is but liberal, the drunkard hee is but sociable, the covetous person hee is but frugal, the proud person, hee is but comely, and handsome, &c. wee say, *nullam virtutem sine patrocinio.*

Sauls Covetousness in sparing the best of the flock; 'twas his devotion, 'twas his zeal to Sacrifice; the Pharisees Covetousness had an act of devotion to patronize or set it off with. So *Fezabel* paints her face, to make it seem comely.

2. Or else if hee cannot perswade them to that, that they are no sins; but conscience is inlightened and quickned, and checks him for them, hee cannot stand against his own light, nor under his own reproofs.

Then hee perswades them they are but veniall, and small sins, or if great, yet pardonable, nay, and that at any time, as the Theef upon the Cross, what? sayes hee, God is mercifull, and if but at the last thou canst say, *God bee mercifull to mee, Lord have mercy upon mee*, why then all is well, there is no doubt of mercy.

And because men are better versed in the Service-book, than in the Scripture, perhaps hee will cite a Text out there.

At what time soever a sinner, &c.

This is the first stratagem, to keep presumptuous sinners from being humbled. And if hee prevail not then, but that notwithstanding all these good words, a soul is convinced of sin, and humbled for it; then hee hath a second.

2. A second Stratagem, and that is to keep humbled sinners from beleiving, and that hee doth these wayes.

1. Hee labours to have them despair of a pardon, and that upon one of these two grounds.

1. Hee will now tell you, either that your sins are greater than can bee pardoned. As *Cain*, Gen. 4. 13.

So it is in the Original, *my sins are greater than can bee pardoned*.

Hee will so aggravate mens sins, and heighten mens trespasses, and so lessen and streighten Gods mercy, that hee will indeavour to perswade their sins are above a pardon, they are greater than Gods mercie to pardon, and that is the first way which hee deals with ignorant consciences in trouble.

2. Or if hee cannot perswade in that, then hee hath another way to bring men to despair, and that is from the will of God.

Why will hee say, though thy sins are not greater than God can pardon, yet they are greater than God will pardon: hee will never bee mercifull to such a wretch as thou hast been, dost thou think God will ever shew mercy to such a vile sinner as thou hast been? whar, one who hath sinned against such a light, such means, such mercies, and committed so horrible sins, and continued in them. And thus hee aggravates sin.

As before hee lessened sin all hee could to keep men from being humbled; so now hee aggravates sin, all hee can, to keep men from beleiving. As before hee enlarged Gods mercy above the bounds of the Law; now hee enlargeth Gods Justice above the bounds of the Gospel.

Before

Before hee presented to you, Gods mercy in a false glasse, to make you presume. And now hee presents Gods Justice to you in a false glasse, to make you despair.

And indeed of the two, hee is better able to set out Gods Justice, than his Mercy, because hee feels the one, and knows what it is, but hee shall never taste of the other; hee can therefore better present Gods Justice as it is, than Gods Mercy as it is.

2. Or if hee cannot bring men to despair upon these grounds, yet another stratagem hee hath to keep men from beleeving.

3. And that is thirdly, by telling them they are not disposed and fitted for mercy, you are not broken for sin, you do not love God, &c.

And in this stratagem hee labours to hinder us, by telling us wee want such dispositions, as follow beleeving, more than such as go before Faith; yet hee oftentimes useth the other, and tells men, they are not humbled enough, nor broken enough; before they were humbled, then any thing would serve the turn to dispose and fit them for Mercy; and now they are humbled, hee tells them, they are never humbled enough.

Before, a sigh in a good mood was enough to qualifie them for Mercy, and the Promise. Now sighs, groans, tears, daily breakings under the burthen of sin is all nothing, all is too little.

Indeed hee fain would have thee ro'lye in Hell, and stay there, or if hee doth not object against thy soul the want of humiliation, Why then hee will tell thee, thou wants Faith; if thou had'st Faith, then thou might go over to the promise, but thou wants Faith; and what doth hee mean by that, why that is, thou wants assurance; hee would put men to assurance, before they do beleewe; hee would put them to the evidence, Christ is their Saviour, before hee suffer them to rest upon Christ as a Saviour. Or if not this; yet hee will tell thee, thou want'st such and such dispositions before thou can beleewe; hee would fain have men either to bring something of their own to the Promise, or hee would have men to expect these things before they go to the Promise, when indeed these things follow upon the souls closing with the Promise.

Thus doth Satan keep many poor souls in a hoodwinkt condition, and hinders them from going over to Christ and the Promise.

And that is the first.

2. The second ground why men are so slow to beleewe, and that is taken from themselves.

1. It doth arise from their ignorance, they know not the tenor of the Covenant, the terms of Mercy. Men brought out of a sinfull condition, once awakened to see their sins, can think of nothing but working themselves to life, licking themselves whole, therefore they fall upon prayers, duties (as I have sometimes told you) as lo many bribes for a pardon, as so many pennies laid

laid out for the purchase of Mercy.

Wee run naturally to the Covenant of works, but wee must bee drawn before wee can go to the Covenant of Grace. *No man can come except, &c.* Joh. 6. 44. A convinced man runs to the Covenant of works, but hee must bee a converted man, that goes truly to the Covenant of Grace.

2. It doth arise from our pride often, that wee will not take Mercy gratis, wee will not deny our selves, and close with Mercy as God tenders it.

You have a strange phrase in *Rom*, 10. 3. *they would not submit to the Righteousness of Faith*, here are proud hearts indeed, that it should bee matter of submission for a condemned man to take a pardon; a wounded man to take a plaister, a sick man a cordiall, a naked man cloathing, a lost sinner a Saviour. One would think this is strange, that it should bee a matter of submission to accept of the Righteousness of Christ to bee saved.

But wee like well of the Spiders motto, *mihi solo debeo*; I owe all to my self, and would bee content to climb to Heaven by a thread of our own spinning.

God is willing to give, and wee would deserve, hee would have all of Grace, and wee would have all of debt. Wee would fain bring our penny to the Promise, yea when wee are nothing, wee would bring our own nothingness, So hard it is to make a soul empty, and when that is done to bring that empty soul over to the Promise.

3. A third ground from our selves, which makes men humbled so slow to beleeve. It may bee too much tenderness, they are afraid of abusing Gods Justice in their closes with his Mercie; Oh say they! I am afraid of presuming of Mercy. It was their fault before to presume the fear of it, their fault now. I say to presume of Mercy was their fault before, and the fear of presuming is their fault now.

One would think this to carry a fair forehead, they dare not beleeve say they, and why so? because they are afraid to presume, is not this a good pretence?

But ah! here is the Prince of darkness, like the Angel of light, let us examine it, thou sayest thou dardest not beleeve, because thou art afraid to presume. And why dost thou fear to presume?

It is presumption to beleeve Mercy, and yet continue in a way of sin; and it is presumption to expect Mercy in a way of unbelief, but it is no presumption to beleeve. Why dost thou fear thou shalt presume? thou canst not say, thou takes that which doth not belong to thee, for it belongs to whoever can take it: But it may bee thou sayest thou art not fitted for Mercy, thou art then fit for Mercy, when thou art made willing to close with Mercy in the terms of Mercy, that is to take Mercy, as to render up thy self to duty, as to give up thy self to obey.

But

But

But thou sayest thou shalt presume, for thou art not worthy of Mercy.

And wouldest thou bee worthy of Mercy? dost thou know what thou sayest? wouldest thou deserve Mercy? where then were Grace? This overthrowes the Covenant of Grace? it cannot bee a Covenant of Grace, if there should bee any thing of thy bringing, which is not of Gods bestowing.

May wee not say to thee truly what *Eliab*, *Dauids* Brother falsely said to him, when hee told him hee came out for Gods Glory. Hee tells him no, it was the pride of his heart, 1 *Sam.* 17. 28. So thou pretends Gods Glory, thou sayest because thou wouldest not wrong Gods Justice, and make Gods Mercy a sinfull mercy, therefore thou doest not beleeve, but take heed it bee not the pride of thy heart.

If the time would permit, I would put something to thee. 1. By way of Question. 2. By way of Supposall.

1. That which I should have put to thee by way of question should have been. 1. Couldst thou not have beleeved God would bee mercifull unto thee, if thou wert not so sinfull? 2. If thou wert more humble, if thou hadst more Grace, couldst thou not bee content to pennance thy self for a time, for thy former sin, were not this good, and what were this but to make thy humiliation a step to Mercy, to a pardon?

2. That which I would put by way of supposall. Suppose thou hadst been a Traytor, and thy Prince should offer thee a pardon for all thy treason, upon condition of acceptance, and rendring up thy self to him for service. And thou shouldest refuse a pardon because thou art a Rebel or Traitor, or because thou doubt'st of the truth and reality of thy Princes tender? or else because thou thinkest thou art not able to do him service for future, therefore wilt not accept of a pardon for present; what should wee think of this? Or suppose a Creditor should tell thee, if thou wouldest but bring thy books, come to him, and reckon with him, and acknowledge thy debt, hee would pardon thy debt. And the debtor should now refuse to come.

1. Either because hee is not able to pay. 2. Or because hee thinks hee shall bee able to discharge all himself in time. 3. Or else because hee doubts of the truth of his intention, instead of bringing him to reckon that hee might pardon him, hee intends to arrest him, and cast him into prison. Is not here a great deal of pride, and unbeleef, and wronging of love?

And how shall wee interpret this standing off? is not the case alike. God tenders mercy to thee, as a Prince, a pardon, and thou refuseth, why? either thou beleevest not the truth of this, that God offers pardon upon beleeving, or else thou thinks to deserve thine own pardon.

So God offers thee an acquittance, if thou wilt bring thy book,
and

and come and reckon with him, confesse sin, acknowledge Mercy; but thou comest not, and what is the reason? either thou beleevest not the truth of this, this is too good news to bee true, thou thinkest it is but to take advantage against thee.

You think when you go to God in confession, you go as a debtor into the hands of a hard Creditor, who doth but wait to arrest him. You cannot beleeve the truth of this offer, or else you think you shall bee able to pay your own debt in time.

4. Another ground from our selves, why wee are so *slow to beleeve*, is, that wee doubt of Gods will, wee doubt whether God will have mercy on us, yea or no.

It is with us as with a Prince or Creditor, as before: were wee but well settled in the Major of the Gospel, in these truths.

1. *That God sent his Son for this end, into the World to save poor sinners.*

2. *That Christ was able to save to the utmost.*

3. *And that Christ was as willing as hee is powerfull, wee should not bee so slow of heart to beleeve.*

My Brethren, what can God do more to perswade you of his willingness? nay more, what could Christ do more than is done?

Will you go by his revealed will? and that you shall bee judged by at the last day, why there you see nothing but willingness of God and Christ to accept of them who come.

If you should go by the revealed will of man, you may bee deceived, they may speak one thing and intend another.

But if you go by the revealed will of God, you cannot miscarry, because Gods heart is really the same that his word is, hee speaks not a syllable more than hee will make good.

Men speak often more than their hearts, or they may speak contrary to their hearts, but God doth not, hee really intends what hee speaks.

And his revealed will tells thee, that hee would have thee saved by comming, &c. that if thou wilt beleeve, thou shalt bee saved. That if thou confesse, &c. therefore no cause to doubt of Gods will.

5. A fifth ground of our *slowness to beleeve*. It may bee you finde some rest to your souls on this side Christ.

It may bee you have been troubled for sin, have been in anguish of conscience, and you have prayed, you have mourned, and thereupon have gotten some peace, and quiet in your souls, and you seek no further.

This is to lick your selves whole.

And how often, how ordinarily doth these things stand between us and Christ, between us and the Promise; if wee found no peace nor satisfaction in these, then wee should go over to Christ, but finding this on this side Christ, therefore are wee *slow of heart to beleeve*.

Now

Now to take away this, you must know that that peace which is not settled upon the heart by a promise, by believing, that peace will never do you good, a true trouble were better.

It is not works, but Christ, not praying, but believing, not the Law, but the Gospel, Christ the Promise, that brings true peace into the soul.

Indeed the other may give a man some ease for the time, but this will never work a sound and substantial peace.

You read in the Wilderness there was no plaister for the stung Israelite, but looking up to the brazen Serpent.

So there is no remedy for a stung sinner, of which the former was a type, both in the malady, and in the remedy, but looking up unto Christ, believing in him.

And you see how Christ doth parallel them in *Joh. 3. 14, 15.*
As Moses lift up the Serpent in the Wilderness, &c.

If the stung Israelite had made a confection of the best herbs in the Wilderness, a plaister of all the sovereign ingredients in the World, and applied with it Mountains of Prayers, Seas of tears, yet this would not have helped him, if with all he had not looked upon the brazen Serpent.

God had set up that way, and nothing else should do the cure. So let the stung sinner make what plaister hee will of duty, of prayers, for the salving of conscience, the healing of the wound, yet if hee do not look up, believe never, healed never.

I grant it (to prevent an objection) that these duties may do something for the stay of a mans spirit, and the quieting of conscience for a time, because being such things as God hath commanded, and in Gods way, they may have some influence into a mans conscience, for the quieting and stilling of it for present.

But these are all too short to bring a sound and substantial peace into the soul, it is not working, but believing, not duty, but Christ that must do that.

If God had intended this for thy cure, if these had been sufficient, what need had hee to have sent Christ into the World? what need had Christ to have dyed and shed his blood? God might have given man ability to have performed duty, and all had then been done.

But the sending of Christ into the World, and the shedding of his blood, shews it was a greater work to redeem souls.

Indeed these things are subservient to the plaister, to the cure, but these things are not the plaister, nor the cure.

By Prayer wee seek and beg for a plaister in a wounded condition; and by Prayer wee praise God when the plaister hath been applied, but this is not the cure, this is not the plaister, God never intended that.

So by hearing wee have discovered to us where the plaister is to be

bee had, and by hearing afterward, wee do but discover our willingness to know more of Gods will, that wee might obey him, but this is not the plaister.

So by works and obedience before healing, wee do but carry our selves in such a deportment and demeanure, as they should do, who wait for such a mercy from God; and by works and obedience afterwards wee do but declare our thankfulness to God when the cure is wrought, but this is not the cure, being justified wee work, wee do not work that wee may bee justified.

And therefore though you should get some obvious refreshment by the performance of duties in the pursuit of Christ, yet let not this slacken, but quicken you in your way; bee thankfull for it, quickened by it, and still remember to arise, this is not your rest.

Hee who rests on this side Christ, will rest on this side Heaven. All your duties will bee but ropes of sand, like chains of glasse, too bricke to draw your souls to Heaven. Though naturall conscience may get some satisfaction from these springs, the performance of duties, yet these are too shallow to satisfie the thirst of a gracious heart.

They are neither full, nor are they pure, nor are they permanent and lasting springs. As I might shew you, not full, because wrought out of our selves, not pure, because mingled with our imperfections, muddy springs, our justifying righteousness is imperfect, but our sanctifying righteousness is imperfect, nor are they constant. Drought will come, the time will come, when these will bee too short to reach comfort into thy soul, that if God lead thee not to a spring, at last thou art undone.

The Brook *Cherith* did supply *Elijah* for a time, but at last it dried up, and could afford him no Water, and had not God brought him then unto a spring hee had perished.

So there are many, who lye a long time by the springs of duty, the streams of performances, and they get some refreshment there which keep them off from going to Christ; but the time will come that these waters will fail, and if then thou hast not a fountain, a Christ to go to, thou wilt perish for all this.

Where on the contrary, here in the greatest drought thou shalt finde waters enough, *Ier. 17. 7, 8. Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for hee shall bee as a tree planted by waters, and shall not see when drought commeth, his leaf shall bee green, and hee shall not bee carefull in the years of drought.*

Years of drought hee shall never see, never bee sensible when heat commeth; *his leaf shall bee green.* And thus much for the second ground, why wee are so slow of heart to beleewe.

3. Ground why wee are so slow of heart to beleewe, is taken from others,

1. *Their heights.*

2. *Their depths.*

1. Wee

1. We look upon the heights of others. We see others of the Saints eminent in Grace, shining with holiness, adorned with gifts and gracious indowments, they can pray, they can command their passions. And then reflecting upon our selves, and seeing our own imperfections; our frowardness of spirit, our untowardness of heart, our weakness, and deadness, wee are thereupon discouraged, and kept off from the Promise of life, &c.

I told you the last day, that wee look upon the best of others; and the worst of our selves; upon the best, not the worst of others. You look upon their enlargements, not their straits, their graces, not their corruptions; their heights, not their depths; their comforts, not their troubles; their victories, not their foils.

This is the difference between you and wicked men, they look upon the worst of the Saints, and by that draw encouragements to sin, or if not, yet make use of their imperfections to countenance their deadness, but you look upon the best of others; and because you fall short of that eminency in them, you are thereupon discouraged and wounded in your comforts.

But admit that others of the Saints were as excellent as thou seest them; as thou apprehends them; and grant it that thou wert weak and full of many imperfections. Yet why should this keep thee off from Christ and the Promise. It is strange that that which should draw thee to the promise, should drive thee from the Promise; will a man refuse physick, because hee is sick; a cordial, because hee is faint; meat, because hee is hungry; money, because hee is poor; cloathing, because naked; you would think this to bee unreasonable, and why not the other?

Affure your selves that is not a good sight of imperfection, that shall either blinde, or bleer the eye of Faith, and hinder us from beholding Christ and the Promise, or that shall discourage, and deter us from going over to Christ and the Promise.

Thou wouldst bee as others of the Saints before thou didst believe; thou must believe before thou canst bee as others are, that which put a difference between thee and him was Faith; there is the same treasury, and the same fulness in Christ for thee, as for others; if thou get Faith to make use of it.

Besides, why should imperfections keep thee off? What man will reject a present pardon because hee sees himself unable to do the Prince future service? who will not take it, and bee more thankful, and the more admire the Princes clemency that should accept of him after all his rebellions, when yet hee could have no eye or respect to any future service or advantage hee could do the Prince. And why then should wee reject Gods pardon, because wee see not our selves able to do him future service. You should take it and bee more thankful, more admire the riches and freeness of Gods Grace, who justifies the ungodly.

Certainly that which gives you the advantage, and puts you into the way of the admiration of God, serves the end most which God aims at in giving of pardon; therefore hee pardons that you might admire and say, *Micah 7. 8. Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?* but the more sin, the more imperfections, the more advantage you have to admire the riches and freeness of Gods Grace and Mercy; therefore why should this discourage you?

Besides, though Princes may pardon former treason, yet they cannot change the traitorous heart, nor can they inable them, for the future to be loyal and obedient. But now God can, with the pardon of sin, hee can and doth change the heart of the sinner, hee lends him away with another heart, with the forgiveness of former disobedience, hee gives strength and ability to obey for future; and therefore why should either present sense of sin and imperfection, or the apprehension of the want of future ability, keep us off from closing with Christ and the Promise; seeing by this the sin is pardoned, the nature is healed, and the soul inabled to future service.

Indeed the way to do him service is to come in, &c.

2. As wee look upon others heights, so wee look upon others depths, and by that keep off from the Promise.

It may be, wee see and hear of others of the Saints who have been exercised with great troubles, terrors, legal breakings, &c. and have been in sad conditions, it may be, for many months, nay years, and thou reflectest upon thy self, and seest thou was never thus humbled, thou never had experience of such legal breakings, either none at all, or not in that measure which others have had; and thereupon thou concludest certainly the Promise doth not belong to mee.

And this is another ground which prevails with many, &c.

Now to take off this in a few words.

1. Why should anothers humiliation be a pattern for thee: when it may be that which enlarged his troubles were,

1. Some outward cross and affliction which was joyned to his inward trouble; as when the fountains from below, and windows from above were opened, there was a great flood, a deluge.

So when afflictions from beneath, and troubles from above concur, this is a deluge of sorrow.

2. Or may be that which enlarged another mans trouble, was some horrible temptations, injections of Satan, blasphemous bloody thoughts, &c.

3. Or may be some bodily distemper, the predominancy of some humour, as melancholly, which gives edge and entertainment to terrors, and spiritual troubles.

4. Or may be his ignorance, in the Covenant of Grace, the terms of Mercy.

5. Or

5. Or may bee the long concealing of his trouble, as you see *David*, *Pfal.* 32.

6. Or may bee giving credit to the lying suggestions of *Satan*.

7. Or may bee his pride, his unbelief, jealousy, frowardness of spirit, as it is with such as will nourish themselves in a needlesse bondage, and will not hearken after comfort, making their chains heavier than God hath made them, who will not suffer a thought of hope or comfort to enter through the anguish of their bondage. Like the Children of *Israel* in *Egypt*, *Exod.* 6. 9. God sent them delivery, but they looked not after it, through the extremitie of their bondage. And is there any reason then, that others humiliation should bee a pattern to thee. Thou mightest as well desire part of their crosse, which yet thou wouldst not do, for a great part of many mens humiliations, is either their sin, or their crosse, &c.

2. Why should other mens humiliations bee a pattern for thee, when yet God doth not require the same measure, nor is the same measure alike necessary to all, neither in respect of God, or of men?

1. Not in respect of man: some need not so much as others.

As some mens flesh is harder to heal than others, so some mens hearts. A Needle may do that to one, which a lance will not do to another. A frown to one, which blows will not do to another.

Some men are of crabbed and untoward spirits, and knotty blocks had need of hard wedges.

2. Some men have longer scores, greater reckonings, have been greater sinners than others, and though not ever, yet ordinarily God doth proportion the sorrow to the sin.

3. Some men of greater parts, of greater places, who are not so easily humbled, many things may bee in the subject, which may vary the case.

And as the same measure is not necessary in respect of man, so the same is not necessary in respect of God, his ends are various.

1. Some men hee intends to bestow greater measure of grace upon, than upon others, and hee layes a proportionable foundation.

2. Some hee intends to use as one of a thousand, to comfort others, therefore hee doth exercise them with difficulties, with humiliations, eclipses of his favour, with temptations, injections of *Satan*, decayes, relapses, that they may bee experimentally able to settle and comfort others *2 Cor.* 1. 4.

3. Some hee intends for great services, great employments, to make them Champions in his cause. And therefore hee doth humble them the more at their bringing in. As you see *Paul*, *Luther*, *Augustine*. All Gods people are Souldiers, but few are Champions, some hee hath for lighter skirmishes, and less humiliation will serve their turn to prepare them for them.

But

But such as hee intends for the main battle, to bee Champions in his cause, hee doth usually exercise with greater difficulties, that so they might not start aside in the day of tryal.

4. Some hee intends to bee patterns and examples of mortification in the world, and therefore carries them on with troubles of spirit, and lets them lye longer in them, that being raised up, they may bee dead to the World ever after.

Thus you see the like measures are not necessary, neither in respect of Gods ends, nor in respect of your selves; and why then should any mans humiliation bee a pattern for thee?

All that can bee said in it is this, that so much is required, as to cast us out of our selves, make us weary of our sins, willing to sell all; cut off right hands, pull out right eyes, to part with the dearest and beloved sins for Christ.

Wee all agree, it is sufficient when it doth cast a man out of himself, and bring him over to Christ; and how much that is who can set down?

A less degree will do that in one, which it will not in another; if the same measures were alike necessary for all, then it would follow,

1. That every one is so to labour to come to that measure, as to receive no comfort in the Promise till hee have attained it.

2. And it would follow, that what comfort any may have gotten in the Promise, they are to yeeld up, if they have not had the like measures that others have attained to; and what perplexities; fears, doubts, would so bee left in the consciences of men, so that they would never finde a bottome to stand on.

As in Grace, a man would never have comfort, if his comfort were to arise from the measures, and not from the truth. So in humiliation, many poor souls in taking others for a pattern, have lost the rule, and put themselves into a greater in capacity to close with the Promise, at a greater distance from Christ than they were before, and have made themselves miserable for the present, and for the future, and so have gone drooping even to their graves. And it had been better for many speakers and hearers, too, if this Doctrin had been pressed more before. How many have had their heads broken in peeces with it, and it is easier for these troubles to break the head, than to break the heart.

But thus much for the second.

Thus you see wee have finished the two generals. That *wee are slow of heart to believe.*

What are the grounds that men are *slow of heart to believe?*

3. Wee come to the next, what are the reasons that this temper of spirit is so offensive unto God? I have given you many reasons in my Sabbath dayes discourse on the third of *John*. Why God was so severe against unbelief.

All which would serve as so many demonstrations of this point,

wee

wee will at this time adde but these three more.

Reas. 1. *Slowness of heart to believe*, is a temper very offensive to God, because it argues and speaks a corrupt heart.

A heart byassed with other respects which hinders from closing with Christ. As Christ saith, *Joh. 5. 44. How can you believe when you seek honour*, when you are byassed with such respects as these?

Such a spirit, either it argues ignorance, or pride, or love of sin, or jealousy of the truth of God, the goodness of God, and this is very offensive; jealousy is the rage of a man, &c. which is more provoking, because God hath so far condescended to our weakness for our establishment, that hee hath not only given us his Promise, his Covenant, his Oath and Seal, and all to comfort us. And if notwithstanding all this, wee shall nourish a spirit of jealousy, and cherish our doubts and distrusts, this must needs bee very displeasing unto God. *Va nobis si nec jurasti Deo credimus.* Aug. If a man should give you his Promise, and yet to satisfie you to his Promise, hee should annex his Oath, and to his Oath his Seal, &c. If yet notwithstanding you will bee jealous and distrust him, how would this make a mans blood to rise? how would hee break forth into rage? what, will you not believe mee? do you think mee to bee a Devil? do you think I will bee perjured? &c.

And how much more must this provoke God, who is immutably true of his word. One syllable being a better bottom for a soul to rest upon, than all the Protestations of men and Angels, men though true, Angels though true, yet they are not in themselves immutably true, because they are but Creatures, but now God is, hee is truth it self, no shadow of change in him.

Nay, and not only true, but able to make good his Word, what hee hath promised. Men may bee true, and yet want ability to perform, but what God hath said, hee will do, because hee is faithfull, and hee is able to do, because almighty.

And hath God condescended to us so far, as not only to give us his Promise, his Oath, Covenant and Seal, and are wee yet *slow of heart to believe*? do wee yet nourish jealousies and distrusts? Why then judge if this must not needs bee a high provocation of God.

And that is the first reason, because this sin speaks corruption of heart.

Reas. 2. Because such a spirit what in it lyes, makes void and null the great things of God, I say as much as in thee lyes, for thou canst not do it. As the Apostle saith, *God is faithfull whether men believe, or believe not*: so God is mercifull, powerfull, wise, gracious, true, whether men will believe, or believe not.

But this I say, as much as in thee lies, thou makest void all the great and stupendious things of God, wee will name these seven,

1. Thou

1. Thou makest void the great counsels of God, all the thoughts of his wisdom in contriving such a way, to advance his glory in the salvation of men. God had purposed and contrived from everlasting to make himself glorious, to set up and advance the glory of his wisdom and grace, and this is the way his wisdom pitched upon from everlasting, to do all this by sending of Christ into the World, and thou by standing out, dost not only frustrate Gods ends in thy salvation, but as much as in thee lyes, nullest and makest void all the thoughts and contrivings of his wisdom; for all this is to no purpose, while thou stands out and wilt not beleeve.

2. Thou makest void all the thoughts of his Mercy, in which he desired to set forth himself, and make himself visible to the lost sons of men, by sending of Christ into the World.

But now if thou wilt not beleeve, to what purpose were all these great things of God; to what purpose was all this glorious fabrick of Gods mercy and counsel, which was the greatest thing that ever came upon his heart: Gods master-peece, which went to the height of his skill and wisdom, to the height of his mercy and love. Beyond which there is a *non ultra* in Gods thoughts, there was no further or more, God could go no higher than himself, all was infinite, but thou in standing off dost annul, and make void all the thoughts of his mercy, and his love, if others should do the like, to what purpose then were all? it would make all this void, and to no purpose: thou dost it as much as in thee lyes. If a man should make a curious peece that should publish his skill, his greatness, wisdom, and a man come and break it all in peeces, would hee not bee greatly offended? And what a fearfull thing is it, to make void that wherein God set himself, to make himself glorious: to obscure that in which God set himself, to make himself visible in? but thou, who art *slow of heart to beleeve* (as far as it lyes in thee) dost this, and therefore what a provocation of God must this bee?

3. Thou dost as much as in thee lyes, make void all the purposes of Gods mercy to thee. The great end which God aimed at in this great work of sending Christ into the World, was that thou mightest beleeve in him, and live. Now if thou stand out, and will not come in, will not close with him, thou dost what lyes in thee, to make void all the purposes of God to thee for good. I say, what lyes in thee, for thou shalt never do it; the election shall bring thee in, Gods purpose shall bring thee to his Promise. Our sins may alter Gods conditional purposes of temporal mercies, as hee tells them, *1 Sam. 2. 30. I said indeed, that thy house, and the house of thy Fathers should walk before mee for ever, but now saith the Lord, bee it far from mee, for they that honour mee, I will honour, &c.* But thou shalt never bee able to make void Gods eternal purposes of good to thee; but yet take heed of tempting God, provoking God,

God; God may make thy body smart for it, though he save thy soul at last; make thee know better, not try conclusions. But I say, what lyes in thee thou dost disanul all the purposes of God to thee for good, which is a fearful thing.

4. Thou dost what lyes in thee, frustrate the expectation of God. You know it is a great affliction to a man to have his expectation frustrated, and the greater the good which was expected, the greater the cut and wound to be disappointed and frustrated. Why I say (may I speak after the manner of men) thou dost what lyes in thee, to frustrate all the expectations of God: Why, what were Gods expectations? but that thou shouldest receive his Son, if hee sent him; that thou shouldest imbrace Christ, beleeve in him. And this seems to be sweetly insinuated in the parable, *Mat. 21. 37. Mark, 12. 6. Surely they will reverence my Son*, though they had abused the Prophets, &c. yet *surely they will reverence my Son*; they owe so much homage to mee, or they will look upon him so great a person, the Son of God; *Surely they will reverence my Son*. But however his Person and Parentage should not procure reverence, yet the service he came about will be a grateful service; hee comes to be Saviour, hee comes to redeem them from Hell. Certainly hee will bee a welcome guest to them; Oh how willing will they be to receive him? how glad to entertain him? with what open armes will they imbrace him? how ready to obey him? *Surely they will reverence my Son*. And in reason who would not have thought so? what welcome might not the King of glory expect, the Prince expect, who came upon such a business? What might not a Prince expect, who came to loosen the captives, to redeem vassals, to relieve distressed, break chains? Sure in all reason hee should have been received with all joy, with all acclamations and willing imbraces: This God expected. But now when in stead of receiving, we reject Christ, sleight Christ, undervalue Christ, when we will not close with him, &c. how doth this crosse the expectation, and frustrate it.

5. We do what lyes in us to make void Gods end in sending Christ. What was the end which God aimed at in this plot, in contriving such a way, in sending Christ into the World? this was his end, that we might beleeve and live, his glory, in our salvation. Surely the end must needs be glorious, when the means and work was so glorious; if the foundation of this work were so glorious, what will the whole structure bee? Now this was one part of Gods end in sending of Christ, that thou shouldest receive Christ, beleeve in him. And so long as thou standest out, thou crossest Gods end, frustrates the end of God. And this must needs be a great provocation of God. If a man did take a great deal of pains in a work; spent all his time and indeavours for some end, and at last be crossed in the end; the work is nothing to him. This provokes, &c. Why thou dost frustrate Gods end?

6. Thou dost as much as in thee lyes, make void the death of Christ; thou makest all his sufferings, and all his blood shed to be to no purpose. What was the end that Christ shed his blood? what was the end Christ dyed? why it was no other but this, that we might beleeve in him, and have a pardon? &c. But now so long as thou standest out, thou frustratest all this; if all were like thee, I pray thee, to what purpose were the death of Christ, the expence and shedding of his blood? And therefore this provokes much; if one of us should suffer much for the obtaining of such an end, if after hee had indured, to bee disappointed of it, this much provokes us.

7. Thou dost as much as in thee lyes, make void all the Promises of God to Christ.

God promised and entered into Covenant with Christ; that if hee would lay down his life and blood, hee would make him King over Saints; hee would give the Heathen for his inheritance, &c. *Isa. 53. Hee shall see of the travel of his soul and bee satisfied*. God promised Christ, that if hee would lay down his life for a people; hee should have them; hee would give a people to him. And thy standing out doth what lyes in thee, to make this Promise void, to make God a lyar to his Son, &c. Thou shalt not bee able. Christ shall have a people, God will yet set his King, &c.

yet if all were like thee, where were Christs people?

Nay, and thou robbest Christ of the reward and fruit of all his death and sufferings, this was the reward Christ was to have for his death, &c.

If a man had sweat, or shed his blood for such a thing, you would not bee so injurious to him, as to hinder him of the fruit of it, every one would bee ready to cry out, of such an act of injustice.

Why, thou art Christs reward, hee shed his blood, laid down his life for this end, for this purpose. And by thy standing out, thou dost what is in thee to rob Christ of this his reward, the fruit of his death, and therefore what a provocation is it?

Reas. 3. Because this temper keeps a man in an unserviceable condition, both to God and man. And this must needs bee very offensive to God.

It was one great end, that God sent Christ into the World for, that wee might bee able to do him service; it was the end of our Creation, and of our redemption too, that being redeemed out of the hands of our enemies wee should serve him, *Luk. 1. 74, 75.*

Though our service was not the impulsive cause of Gods redeeming us, though it was not the motive, which did perswade and prevail with God to send Christ into the World, to redeem us, yet this was an end, one main end which God aimed at in sending Christ into the World, that wee might bee able to serve him without fear, &c.

Christ did not discharge us from the debt of sin, to free us from the debt of service; but therefore did hee pay the one, that wee might bee able to return the other. As the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 12.* where having shewed that wee are justified, and our sins pardoned, hee concludes, *therefore Brethren, wee are debtors not to the flesh, &c.* Christ hath broken the bands of subjection to others, that wee might take upon us the yoke of service to him.

Christ freed us from the curse of the Law, that wee might yeeld obedience to the Commands of the Law; from the penalties, that wee might obey the Precepts; from the Law, as a Covenant, that we might walk in obedience to the Law as a Rule. *Plane dicimus decessisse legem quod onera, &c.* That as the Law was given with Evangelical purposes, so it might now bee kept of us with Evangelical principles.

So that this was one main end that God aimed at in our redemption, that wee might bee able to do him service.

Now therefore that which crosseth this great end which God aimed at, and keeps us in an unserviceable condition to God, must needs bee very offensive to God,

But that unbelieving doth. It makes you utterly unserviceable to God.

There is a twofold unbelief. 1. Reigning. 2. Remaining unbelief. For

For the first, where Unbelief reigns, that man is altogether dead, and no more able to do a peece of service to God, than a dead man to perform actions of life. As Christ saith, *Joh. 15. 5. without mee yee can do nothing.*

And for the second remaining Unbelief, so far as Unbelief remains, so far it acts, so far as it prevails, so far are you wounded, disabled for service. Though there bee not a total and universal impotency, as in the former, yet there is a partial disability, and this is more or lesse, according to the workings and prevailings of Unbelief in you.

It is said of *Abraham*, Heb. 11. 8. *That by Faith Abraham obeyed God.* And it was a high act of obedience.

It is Faith which doth inable us to obey, and quicken us in obedience.

1. It begets *Soul-inabling-Principles*, such Principles as are suitable to the command, and thing commanded.

2. Faith supplies a man with *Soul-inabling-strength* from Christ.

Wee have not only inherent, but assistant strength, not only operative, but cooperative, &c. from Christ, and Faith furnisheth us with it.

3. Faith doth furnish a man with *Soul-inabling-considerations*, 1. From God. 2. From the work. 3. From the rewards, &c.

2. It inables the soul to suffer.

1. It puts the soul into a suffering frame.

2. It doth furnish the soul with suffering resolutions; Faith cloatheth the soul with strong resolutions; as in the three Children, *Dan. 3.*

3. Faith begets suffering graces. Courage, magnanimity, patience, humility, self-denial, contempt of the World, high prizings of Christ.

4. Faith layes in suffering strength, strength from God, from the Promise, &c.

5. It propounds to the soul suffering rewards, for these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work, &c. *2 Cor. 4. 17.* All which I might insist large upon, to shew you how Faith doth inable the soul, &c. So Unbelief it keeps the soul in an unserviceable condition. Hee that doth not yeeld obedience to the promise in a way of beleeving, cannot yeeld subjection to the Precept in a way of obeying; men of a bad beleeve, can never bee men of a good life.

Hence wee read, that Faith and Obedience, and Unbelief, and Disobedience are expressed by the same name, *Rom. 15. 31.* which shews how near they are together. If you bee once beleevers, you will then bee obedient, and while you continue in Unbelief, you must needs bee disobedient.

It is observeable, that God gave the Law four hundred and thir-

ty years after the Promise, as the Apottle saith, *Gal. 3. 17.* which shews, that Faith in the Promise must bee the spring of all our obedience to the Precept.

When God gave the Law, see what a preface there is to obedience; *I am the Lord thy God.* As if hee had said, here is that which must inable you to obedience.

After *Adams* fall, God doth not then give him any new commands, hee puts him not to work again, but now to beleeve; hee gave the Promise then, and not the Law, to shew that now hee must have a new Principle of working, before hee could work, hee must now beleeve, that hee might bee able to do. Many men think they can do God better service by doubting, than by beleeving, by standing off, than by comming in.

But alas! Satan deludes thee, if hee get between thee and the Promise, if hee keep thee off from Christ, hee will either dishearten thee from obedience, or hee will discourage and disable thee in thy obedience. Faith is the spring of action, the rise of all obedience, without Christ wee can do nothing, and without Faith, wee must needs bee without Christ; for Faith gives the soul union and communion with him, it implants us into Christ, and then, and not till then, wee bring forth fruit.

It is said of *Abraham*, *Heb. 11. 8.* *That by Faith Abraham obeyed God;* and you know, it was a high act of Obedience, the sacrificing of his Son, and so is the sacrificing of our sins. It is Faith alone that doth inable the soul to do, to suffer.

Wee now come to the Application, wherein I shall bee brief, because most of it I shall refer to the second Doctrin.

Use 1. If so, then see how Satan doth delude their souls, whom hee perswades not to beleeve is a vertue, is a thing pleasing unto God.

Are there not many? who as *Jonah* said, *hee did well to bee angry.* So they say, they do well not to beleeve, they do well to stand out, &c.

You shall hear some make it a matter of conscience not to beleeve; they ought not to beleeve; should such sinful creatures, such vile wretches so polluted? &c.

Should they beleeve, this were to presume, to sin against Gods Justice in the closes with his Mercy, this were to give holy things to dogs, &c. Satan presents sin.

And some there are so witty, as to object against all that can be brought, as if they took a pride to argue themselves into a condition of misery, setting the pride of their own carnal reasonings, against the riches and freeness of the mercy of God; if you bring a promise to them, when cast down for sin, and indeavour to fasten a promise on them, they can tell you, that this is not the meaning of the Promise, or certainly this Promise doth not belong to mee.

Alas

Alas will they say ! all this is but lost labour, you might as well carry a cordial to a dead man, as bring a Promise to them; it is a fruitless thing, if upon examination wee shall discover some spots or a Child in them, some undoubted evidences of one whom God speaks mercy unto. Yet they will tell you all these are false; all these are in Hypocrisie. Its true, if these things were in truth mine, I could then conceive some hopes of mercy, but I know they are all in Hypocrisie; they are all unsound and counterfeited, &c. *Ergo* no Mercy.

Thus doth many a poor soul take pains to reason himself into misery, and side with Satan, and take part with the corruptions, and unbeleeving of his own heart against himself.

And what will bee the end of it? sure it will breed bitterness in the latter end; for the present, it is thy sin, and for the future, it will bee thy misery; either it will cause God to withdraw himself from thee, as hee tells them, *Deut. 32. 20.* Or cause thee to withdraw thy self from God. As the Apostle speaketh, *Heb. 3. 12.* *Take heed least there bee in you an evil heart of Unbeleeif in departing from the living God.* Hee that withdraws himself from the Promise, cannot long keep close to the Precept; hee that keeps at a distance from Mercy, will not long walk in the wayes of duty.

When the workings of natural conscience are done, when fears are allayed, when troubles are blown over, then will all service bee done too; if not, yet the continuance of troubles, and fears, will make you cast of all, and say, there is no hope; or will discourage your hearts in your walking, that your life will bee little better than a martyrdom, with continual racks and troubles. It was before thy sin not to beleeve, but now it will bee thy misery, before thou wouldest not, now thou canst not. Thou soughtest arguments before to keep thee off from the Promise, and thou wilt now seek as many arguments, against such arguments which might bring thee over to the Promise. And this miserable unbeleeif, is the fruit of sinful unbeleeif. This disability to come to the Promise, is the punishment of thy former slowness to come to the Promise. And this temper you shall see in many, who have reasoned themselves down, do finde it now a harder work to reason themselves up again.

Who have put themselves into a greater incapacity to close with the Promise by those wayes which they have thought to bee helpful to them. It is easier to give entertainment to carnal reasonings, to the suggestions of Satan, and the objections of our own fleshy hearts, than to get rid of them again.

Many have given willing entertainment to these at first, who would more gladly bee rid of them afterward if they could.

But the continuance of them is a fruit of your entertainment of them.

If you will entertain doubts and fears, and set up your own carnal

nal reasonings against the Promise, then you shall have doubts; and fears, and carnal reasonings when you would not, to keep you from the Promise. As God said in another case, *Hos. 8. 11. Because you have made many Altars to sin, therefore Altars shall bee unto you to sin.* So here, because you have set up your carnal reasonings, and your unbelieving thoughts against the Promise, to hinder you from closing with the Promise, therefore carnal reasonings, &c. shall bee a hinderance, &c.

Thus is miserable Unbeleef, a fruit of sinful Unbeleef; which the more miserable, the lesse sinful, the more seen, the more sorrowed for, the more lamented and mourned for, the lesse sinful, while it was your sin it was not seen, it was not sorrowed for, and now it is, &c. and the more misery, the lesse your sin in Gods account. Carnal reasonings were before your pride, now your grief; you sought them before, you would bee rid of them now; they were your delight before, now they are your trouble, your misery, which is something.

But they had not now continued to bee your misery, if they had not before been entertained as your sin, &c. This is the fruit of *slowness of heart to beleeve.*

Use 2. Is of Exhortation. If so then, three things. 1. Bee convinced of the greatness of the sin. 2. Bee humbled for it, 3. Bee quickened to beleeve.

1. Bee yee convinced of the greatnesse of the sin, it is a sin whereby you wrong God, gratifie Satan, wrong your own souls.

1. You wrong God in it, you obscure his glory, you limit his power, you contemn his wisdom, you give a lye to his truth, you abuse his love, you sleight and reject all the precious, and peerlesse thoughts of his Mercy and Grace.

I told you not long since, that God was more severe against Unbeleef than any sin, because Unbeleef was most severe to God. No sin was more cruel to God, God hath no greater enemy in the World than Unbeleef. It is an enemy to whatever is most dear and precious unto God. Therefore is hee such an enemy to Unbeleef; if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, *Heb. 10. 38.*

2. You gratifie Satan. I beleeve thou wouldst not willingly (if thou knew it) gratifie Satan for a World.

I tell thee in thy standing off, thou dost not only gratifie him, but thou canst do Satan no greater a pleasure, no greater a courtesy in the World.

In this Satan hath all his desire of thee, that which hee desires is to make void all the great things of God, that which hee desires, is to make the death of Christ in vain; to make the blood of Christ to bee shed in vain, to make the great counsel of God, the great things of his wisdom and mercy to no purpose in the World;
And

And by this standing off thou dost what lyes in thee to answer his desire, and therefore this must needs glad him.

Besides Satan knows full well, if hee do not wound thy Faith, thy Faith will wound him, break the head of the Serpent, and therefore it is that which hee laboureth after in all his temptations, if hee cannot keep thee from beleeving, yet to wound and weaken thy Faith, that thou mayest not wound him.

If hee cannot make thee his friend, yet if hee can weaken his adversary. If hee cannot take away thy weapon, yet if hee can weaken thy arm, or blunt thy weapon, hee is content.

If hee cannot destroy thy Faith, yet if hee can weaken thy Faith, if not hurt thy Faith, yet if hee can keep thy Faith from hurting him, by weakening of it: for every act of Faith wounds Satan, bindes him in chains, &c.

And therefore if hee can prevail to keep thee from beleeving, or if hee can weaken and wound thy Faith, hee is well contented, this gratifieth him.

What can gratifie him more, than to make a Pageant of all the great things of God, than to make all thele great things like a dream?

What can gratifie him more, than to keep thy soul at a distance from Christ and the Promise, what can pleasure him more, than to make a soul look upon God, as a God of terror and wrath?

What more, than to keep the soul upon racks, upon fears, discouragements and disquiets, this is some of his own spirit of darkness.

Nay, what can gratifie him more, than to keep a soul in a dead unserviceable condition, make a man unfit to live, unfit to dye, unfit for any service to God and man?

Why, all this doth Satan do, if hee can but prevail to keep thy soul from Christ, at distance from the Promise, as I could shew you at large, &c. The way Satan doth it, is by setting out sin. Though I would bee willing to see sin, yet I am not willing to see sin in the Devils glasse, I am not willing to see sin, when Satan discovers sin.

Satan hath two glasses, wherein hee discovers sin.

1. Hee hath a lessening or extenuating glasse, wherein hee discovers sin to wicked men; which makes them appear less than they are; great sins, small sins, infirmities, and lesser sins to bee no sins.

2. And Satan hath a multiplying or magnifying glasse, wherein hee discovers sin to them, when cast down, and extends it, not onely above the greatness of sin, but of mercy also.

As I would have my eyes broad and open, to see sin when God discovers it. So I would shut mine eyes when Satan discovers sin.

Quest. But how shall I know when God and when Satan discovers sin?

1. When

21. When God discovers sin, hee keeps up the apprehensions of mercy above the greatness of sin.

But when Satan discovers sin, hee heightens sin above the riches of mercy. As you see in *Cain*, גְּדוֹל עוֹנֵי כַּיִן *my sin is greater than can be pardoned*,

2. When God discovers sin, he doth not bleere, but rather clear the eye of Faith to the beholding of Christ, hee makes the soul fitter to see Christ, doth not hinder, but helpeth the soul in sight of Christ.

But when Satan discovers sin, hee doth ever bleer and blinde the eye of Faith, from the beholding of Mercy; either hee discovers the malady, and conceals the remedy, or hee holds the eye of Faith, that it cannot look upon Christ for mercy.

Hee puts the soul into a present incapacity to look up to God for mercy; hee stings, but holds not up the brazen Serpent.

3. When God discovers sin, it is to drive us out of our selves, and to draw us unto Christ and the Promise, makes the Law a Schoolmaster, &c. *Gal. 3. 24.* but Satans discoveries of sin, sets us further off from Christ.

4. When God discovers sin, it is to make the soul more in love with Christ, to prize Christ more, to advance him more, to love him, and desire him more. It is such a discovery that makes the soul to run to the remedy.

But when Satan discovers sin, it is to make us more affraid of Christ, to flye from Christ as *Adam*, never the more to desire him.

5. When God discovers sin, hee humbles the soul under the sight of it, hee makes a man to abhor himself, makes sin hatefull to him.

But when Satan discovers sin, it is to discourage us, not to humble us: hee may make sin fearful, but never makes it hateful.

Besides, as you may know by the manner and the end of the discovery, whether Gods or no.

So by the time and temper wee are in.

Satan discovers sin, when hee hath gotten the soul at an advantage; he comes upon us as *Simeon* upon the *Shechemites* when they were sore, *Gen. 34.* when hee hath gotten the hill and the wind on us; when wee are in some sad condition, when in temptation, when in darkness, when in some distresses, when wee are drawn from our succours.

It is a passage of one, that Satan, when hee discovers sin, and so hee openeth our wound; hee gets us into the wilderness, into the cold, from our friends, succours, &c. But when the Spirit of God openeth our wounds, it is by the fire, friends about us, cordials near us, &c.

But I think the difference is rather to be taken from the manner of the discovery, than from the end and effects of it.

Well

Well then, that is a sinfull looking on sin,

1. Which heighteneth sin above the riches of mercy.
2. Which bleereth and blindeth the eye of Faith from beholding Christ and the Promise.
3. Which sets the soul at a farther distance from Christ.
4. Which makes the soul afraid of Christ.
5. Which discourageth the soul under sight of it. And hee that thus looks upon sin in Satans glass, no marvel if hee bee *slow to believe*, and to come over to the Promise.
7. When Satan discovers sin, hee rather makes a malady, than discovers a malady, never discovereth one wound, but makes another, never discovereth a sin, but takes a course that that discovery shall bee sinfull.

3. Thirdly, as you wrong God, and gratifie Satan, so you injure your own souls,

1. You rob your selves of comfort, and keep your selves in unnecessary racks and troubles, and bondage. And this is a great evil. Nature cannot subsist without comfort, comfort is to the soul, what the soul is to the body, a man cannot live without it, and it puts grace to it too, though for a time Grace may live, and act strongly in the want of comfort, yet when troubles continue, and a man walks long without comfort, it will put Grace to it, to the utmost to subsist.

Oh what abundance of comfort, what floods of consolation, what peace, what joy, dost thou rob thy self of in thy standing off!

2. You hinder your souls of Grace. Grace keeps a proportion with Faith. So much Faith, so much Grace, &c. keep down Faith, and all Grace is kept down, and where Faith stirs, all the wheels move, its the spring of motion, the Master-wheel. Faith is the stomach which receives all for the nourishment of the whole. As all the members depend upon the stomach, so all the Graces upon Faith. It is a Mediatour to our Mediatour, it fetcheth in provision to the soul, all depends upon it. If Grace be weak, Faith goes over to Christ, &c. for the supply of strength.

3. You make your selves every way unserviceable to God, as I shewed you, you make your selves unable to do, unable to suffer for him. You make your selves good for nothing, unserviceable to God, to the Church, to his cause, to your selves too, &c. Many there are that think they can do God better service in standing off, than in comming in, by Fear, than by Faith.

They think that in nourishing their doubts and their fears, they do cherish their care, watchfulness, humility.

And on the contrary, they think, that if once they should come to believe, then they should bee more loose and careless, and take more liberty to themselves. Indeed, you would have more liberty to service, not to sin. You would not bee tyed to

Quantum credimus, tantum amamus.

service with coards of fear, but with bands of love, your principle of service, and your manner of service would bee changed, where now you serve him out of fear, then out of love; now out of convictions of conscience, then out of propensions of a divine nature; now you serve him as slaves involuntarily, then as sons with willingnes and delight, &c.

Now you do duty as a task, then as your trade. And you will walk in the wayes of duty, though you see no commings in.

As a man that loves his trade, that loves his calling, hee will hold it up, and follow it, though hee get nothing by it, though no gain or comming in by it. So the soul which hath a Principle bred in him suitable to the things of God, which is wrought by Faith, hee will hold up to pray and to do duty, though hee finde not commings in; there is a natural agreeableness between him and duty, between his spirit and the work, and though hee never get good by it, yet hee will hold up his spirit to the doing of it.

As it is with a man, whose nature is sensualized, that hath sinned away the very common Principles, pluckt up the very senses of nature, hee will drink, and bee drunk, though hee undo himself by it, though hee hurt his body, impoverish his estate, yet hee will drink, &c. As Solomon saith, a *Whore will bring a man to a morsel of bread*, will undo a man, yet hee will go on in sin, hee will not leave his sin, though undone by it; hee will sin, not only though hee get nothing, but though hee get hurt, though hee undo himself thereby, yet hee will go on in sin, and the reason is, that universal suitability that is between his soul and sin.

So on the other side, a godly man hee will serve God, hee will hold on in duty, in obedience, though hee finde no comming in by it.

There is such a suitability between the spirit of a beleever, and the work, that though there is no commings in, though hee finde no peace, no comfort in the wayes of God, yet hee will hold up to the work.

Where now an unbeliever, if hee do not by these things get peace which is all hee looks after in the doing of it, if he do not get comfort, at last hee throws off all, because there was no Principle of suitability to hold him to the duty.

Therefore you see how Satan deludes you. Faith alone is the spring of action, that which sets us a work, and quicken us in working; if Faith bee up, all his Graces will bee so too, and if that bee down, all other Graces are weak, and down with it.

As *Parisensis* saith, it is the vertue of a Chrystal, when the vertues of other precious stones are extinct, to raise them, and revive them again. So doth Faith with our Graces, when *David's* heart was down in *Psal. 43. 5.* you see hee recovers himself by his Faith, no sooner did hee exercise his Faith, but his heart is raised.

That which quickeneth you to service, and enables you in service,

vice,

vice, is Faith, and that which deads your spirit, and makes you unserviceable, is unbeleef, and therefore bee convinced of your sin.

2. Bee humbled for it, this is the great sin, the womb of sin, the Mother and Nurse of sin, as I have shewed.

That which holds up Satans Kingdome in you, is your unbeleef; if this fort were once taken, all the rest would quickly yeeld up.

You see when Christ would conquer covetousness, hee labours to conquer unbeleaving, as you see, *Mat. 6. 25.* to the end.

That being overcome, all the rest yeeld up, and are vanquisht. Nay it is a sin which doth not only uphold particular sins, but the state of sin. It is called a state of unbeleef, wee do not say, a state of drunkenness, a state of swearing, &c. but a state of unbeleef, others are but particular, this an universal sin. And is there not then cause to bee humbled for it? you see what a sin it is, how you wrong God, how you gratifie Satan, how you injure your selves, and is there not cause then to bee humbled for it?

Men are hard to bee humbled for this sin, because hard to bee convinced either that they are guilty of it, or that it is a sin.

Prophane and wicked men, worldly men, they will not bee convinced that they do not beleve. Though there bee nothing more plain, if the Devil did not delude them, for Faith and sin cannot stand together, you can no more separate Holiness and Faith, than Light and the Sun.

And humbled men they are hard to bee convinced that it is a sin.

Though it is easy to convince them that they do not beleve, they are sensible enough of that, yet it is hard to perswade them that it is a sin, not to beleve, that it is their duty to beleve, they think they do well in keeping off from the Promise, they express their tenderness of Gods justice and holiness, and judge it a great wrong to both, that God should bee merciful to such sinners as they. But I must tell thee, it is a greater sin than all thy sins, a killing, a murthering, an undoing sin. It is a finishing sin that seals thee up in a state of sin, and therefore you had need to bee convinced of it, and humbled for it.

3. Bee yee quickned to beleve.

What shall I do now to perswade with you, who are *slow of heart to beleve*, to come in and beleve? Alas! all that I can say is nothing, if God do not mightily work upon your hearts, and perswade with you.

Shall I tell you there is an inexhaustible fulness of mercy in God, and merit in Christ for the greatest sinner among you, and this is something. Shall I say that God is willing to forgive the greatest sinner of you, if you will now come in and beleve?

If you will go by Gods revealed will, and thou hast no other rule to

go by, nor to bee judged by, there God tells thee that hee keeps open house, hee invites, hee excites, hee intreats, hee beseeches to come, these were something to perswade with our hearts. But I shall pass them. I will only name these two to perswade.

1. Consider, God commands thee to beleeve.

2. Consider, thou can do God no greater pleasure than to come in and beleeve.

1. Consider, God commands thee to beleeve, 1 Joh. 3. 23. *This is his Commandement, that wee should beleeve on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.*

And what can thy heart now reason against this? will not this bee enough to answer all thy fears and scruples? to beat down all that thy unbelieving heart can say against the Promise.

Why God doth not only invite thee, but hee commands thee to beleeve.

Gods command is a sufficient warrant to beleeve, and will bee sufficient security to all them that do beleeve.

1. I say it is a sufficient warrant to beleeve. Men may command things, and tell us that our obedience to them shall bee sufficient warrant to us, and yet they may want power enough to secure us in our obedience to them, but it is not so with God, his command will be a warrant sufficient to carry out any soul in his obedience to him. Doth Satan say, wherefore dost thou beleeve? thou art a Reprobate, thou art cast away, thou hast no right to the Promise, but thou must say then, thou art a Creature, and God commands thee to beleeve, and in obedience to Gods command, though thou fees nothing but death for the present, yet thou wilt beleeve.

Doth bee say, thou hast no right to a Promise, not any title to Mercy: yet mayest thou say, thou art bound to the Precept, though I cannot clear my right to the Promise, yet I am sure I am to obey the Precept, I am bound to the obedience of the command, and God commands mee to beleeve.

Yea, and thou may say thus much, if I am bound to beleeve (as I am) then I may bee able by my beleeving to clear my interest in the Promise.

Thou mayest tell him here is a command for thee, none then for him, hee is out of hope. It is an infinite mercy to stand under the command of beleeving, the Devils do not, the damned do not, thou doest, which is infinite mercy.

2. As Gods command is a sufficient warrant to beleeve, so it is sufficient security if wee do beleeve, there was never a soul that perished in a way of obedience, in a way of beleeving.

Doth Satan say, thou mayest venture thy soul if thou wilt? but thou dost but cast away thy soul, for thou shalt never bee saved, God will never own thee.

Thou mayest say again, Gods command is a sufficient warrant for thee to beleeve, men may fail us and bee men, but God cannot fail us and bee God.

But

But put it to the worst, though thou do not know whether thou shalt bee saved, yet this thou knowest, that God commands thee to believe.

Well then, bee peremptory, and resolve in believing; say, if I dye, I will dye in a way of believing, in a way of obedience to the command, not in a way of disobedience to it.

This I know, if I believe not, I must perish, *hee that believeth not is condemned*, but if I do believe, if I do go on in a way of obedience, who knows whether God will bee mercifull? nay, who knows not but that hee will? I must tell you, this resolution will put the Devil to it; hee knows not what to say to such a man, nay and it puts God to it too, for God cannot reject him, who will yet go on to serve him, though hee should never own him.

2. Consider, you can do God no greater pleasure than to come in and believe. Thou honourest all-God, as I shall shew thee in the second Doctrin.

It is a great deal of ease and pleasure for a full and pained breast to bee sucked; the breast of Mercy and Promise is full, yea and in pain too, and thou shalt do God (let mee speak after the manner of men) the greatest pleasure thou canst do, to come and suck, *Joh. 6. 28.* when the people asked, *what shall wee do, that wee may work the works of God?* Mark then how Christ answers, *why this is the work of God, that you believe in him.* As if hee had said, would you do that which would content God? would you do that which pleaseth him? why this is that which doth wonderfully content God, this is that doth admirably please God, to believe; I tell thee by this thou makest God amends for all the wrong thou hast done him all thy life. Nothing else will, if thou shouldest go about to redeem every oath with an age of precizeness and exactness; every idle word and action with an eternity of praises and tears; all thy exactions and injustice with a treasury of alms; all this were nothing to the making of God amends. But here do but come over to the Promise; do but close with Christ, and thou makest God amends for all; God will bee fully satisfied, not with thy Faith, but with Christ, not with thy believing, but with Christ, whom thy Faith holds up. Nay, not only satisfied, but *ipse tibi velim & debitor*. I would not only bee satisfied, but I would bee thy debtor, to give thee eternal life. Oh then that you who are *slow of heart to believe*, that you would now come in. Close with Christ, and then thou mayest set Christ against all that the Law, Justice, Sin, Hell, Satan can say against thee. You see the Apostle did so, *who is hee that condemneth? it is Christ that dyed*: Hee makes a challenge of all; sets the death of Christ against whatever can bee brought; so mayest thou. Let us weild this weapon, &c.

1. Doth Satan say thou hast sinned?

Why, but may the soul say, I have closed with him who hath suffered for sin, what can my debt of sin bee; that the payment of
his

his sufferings hath not fully answered.

2. Doth hee say thou hast sinned against the great God of Heaven? yea, but thou mayest say, I have an interest in him, whose Righteousness is the Righteousness of the great God of Heaven. *Jehovah* our Righteousness, and that is able to suffice for that.

3. Doth hee say the glory of the great God is debased by thy sinning? Why, but thou mayest say, will not the emptying of his glory, who is the brightness of his Fathers glory, answer for that?

4. Doth hee say thou hast sinned against knowledge? Why but thou mayest say, all that Christ did, and all hee suffered, hee did with knowledge, *Joh. 18. 4. Jesus knowing all things, &c.*

5. Doth hee say thou hast sinned with delight? Why, but thou mayest say, Christ hath suffered with greater delight, than I have sinned. Hee delighted to do the will of God, and this was the will of his Father, *that hee should give his life for mee, Joh. 6. Luk. 12. 50.* And it was said of him, that hee was straitned till the hour came, as men that delight in a work which they long to bee upon.

6. Doth hee say thy sins lye in thy spirit? Yea, but thou mayest say, the chiefeft part of his suffering did lye in his spirit; *his soul was heavy to death, Mat. 26. 38. when hee sweat drops of blood, &c. Luk. 22. 44.*

7. Doth hee say thou art still full of corruptions? Why, but thou mayest say, Christ is full of holiness, and by him, *though I bee black, yet I am comely.* As I look not to be justified by mine own inherent righteousness, so I shall not bee condemned for this remaining corruption, so long as it is not reigning, so long as seen and sorrowed for. Though I desire to bee acceptable to him in holiness, yet I do not desire that my holiness should bee the ground of my acceptance.

Thus may a soul which hath closed with Christ bee able to weild this, to set Christ against whatever Justice, Law, Sin, Satan brings. Oh! then let us bee stirred up, you that are *slow of heart to beleeve* to come over; thou seest thou canst do him no greater pleasure. Thou thinkest thou dost well in doubting, but thou dost exceedingly offend God; thou canst not do him a greater discourtesy, &c.

Object. *But doth God command everyone to beleeve pardon?*

Ans. God commands every one to do the act of Faith, but not to beleeve a pardon till hee have done that.

If any shall get hold of the horns of the Altar, and yet rest in sin, God will deal with him as *Joab, &c. 1 King. 2. 28, 29, &c.*

God commands thee not to beleeve a pardon, so long as thou purposest to go on in sin, but yet hee alwayes commands thee to beleeve him, so as to give up thy self to Christ, &c. that thereby thou mayest have pardon, and assurance, and salvation.

A
TREATISE
OF THE
Miserable Condition
OF
UNBELIEVERS.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
And MASTER of C.C.C.



LONDON:
Printed by Robert Ibbisfon, for Thomas Parkhurst, and
are to be sold at his Shop over against the Great
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And Master of CCC.



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A
TREATISE
OF
HYPOCRISY.

BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
And MASTER of C.C.C.



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TREATISE OF HYPOCRISY

SAMUEL BOYLSTON, D.D.

And Master of CCC.



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A
TREATISE
OF
HYPOCRISY

ISAIAH 58. 2.

Yet they seek mee daily, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation, that did Righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God. They ask of mee the Ordinances of Justice; they delight in approaching to God.



TEXT, which I may tremble to read, and you to hear. Well may wee ask that question, -- *Lord, who is it then that shall bee saved?*

Is it possible to do thus much, and yet miss of Heaven? *Lord, who is it then, that shall bee saved?*

The whole World may bee divided into four ranks of men.

1. *Some, that are in the Church visible, but not of the Church invisible.*
 2. *Some, that are of the Church, but not in the Church.*
 3. *Some, that are both in the Church, and of the Church.*
 4. *Some, neither in, nor of the Church.*
- Some, that have both right to, and possession of this great privilege.*
Some, that have possession, but not right.
Some, that have right, but not possession.

Some, neither possession, nor right.

But yet to come nearer. Those that are within the pale of the Church, and so within the bounds of Gods call, wee may rank in to these three orders of men.

1. *Some, who are Atheistical and prophane.* Such as will do nothing for Heaven: as Gallio. --- *They care for none of these things.* Act. 18. 17.

2. *Some, who are Hypocritical and unsound.* That will do something, but as good as nothing.

3. *Some, who are sincere and upright.* Who will come up to Gods price, and walk thoroughly in all the wayes of God.

But wee shall yet draw them into a narrower compass, viz.

Those, who are pretenders to Heaven. Of which there are but two sorts of people in the World. For wee will cast out the *Atheist*, the *Worldling*, the *prophane Person*, the *Drunkard*, the *Swearer*. These are men, upon whose forehead you may read, *They are going to Hell*. There are then but two sorts, which are pretenders for Heaven.

1. The first is, the *Formal Christian*.

2. The second is, the *Upright and Sincere*.

1. The first, hee will do something for Heaven: hee will bid much for Heaven: hee will walk in the round of duty: hee looks to the matter, but neglects the manner.

2. The second, hee will come up to the price; hee will do all Gods commands; looking to the *Manner*, as well as to the *Matter*.

The one, hee will give God the carcass and body of duty. The other, hee will give God the life and spirit of duty.

Of the first sort wee have some in the Text, who went high, to fall short of Heaven at last. Surely, if wee but read the words, and if God had not said, they had been unsound, wee should have judged them of the *best of men*.

Do but cast your eyes upon the Text, and read over the particulars.

1. *They seek God,*] and not for a time only, in a storm, in trouble; as many will do. Believe mee, they go further. *They seek mee daily.* They had their morning and evening Prayers.

2. *They delight to know my wayes.*

1. *They knew the wayes of God.*

2. *They delighted to know his wayes;* which is equivalent to this, they did not only know the wayes of God, but desired to know the wayes of God; and for ought I know, might have some kinde of delight in the knowledge of his wayes.

3. *As a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinances of their God.*] That is, if you looked upon them, they would seem to bee as holy a people, as any I have in the World. There is none who would judge otherwise of them by any outward appearance, but that they were as holy, as sincere, as any in the

the World. Though they were not a Nation that did Righteousness, yet they appeared to bee so: They were as a Nation, that did Righteousness, not only as a Nation, who heard, who knew, who spake Righteousness, but as a Nation that did Righteousness. They appeared to the judgement of the World to bee as exact as the choicest Saints, which God had in the World.

4. *They ask of God the Ordinances of Justice.*] They desire and pray that God would inform them in the wayes of Justice, how they should bee governed and ruled in the World: a people which hath respect to their civil Lawes and Government, pretending to desire Gods Warrant, Gods Direction, Gods Rule in all things; As if they would do nothing, even in their civil Affairs, without Gods special Warrant and Direction.

5. *They take delight in approaching to God.*] Than which, how can wee have an higher expression? What? do they approach to God? and daily approach to God, as you see in the beginning? And do they delight in approaching to God? do they delight in hearing? do they delight in praying? do they delight in approaching to God, in his Ordinances? Here was a stupendious height, What can wee say more: how can wee go any higher? Here wee may stand and tremble; stand and bee astonished; stand and bee amazed. Lord, who is hee that shall bee saved!

May men do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven? what will become of thee, that doest nothing? what will become of thee, thou Drunkard? what will become of thee, thou Swearer? thou prophane Person? Worldling? if it bee thus with the green Tree, what will become of the dry Tree? if it bee thus with them that appear to bee good, what will become of them that appear to bee evil?

Thus you see the astonishing height, which yet an unsound spirit may reach unto. How much may bee done by a man, and yet bee unsound here, and fall short of Heaven hereafter!

So that now I shall trouble you, but with one Doctrin. (And I beleeve, before I have done it, it will trouble you.) And that shall bee from the general, the whole body of the Text together, and it is this.

Doct. It is possible for a man, to do much in the wayes of God; even to abound in all outward Performances, and yet bee false at the heart; and yet have an unsound spirit here, and miss of Heaven hereafter.

This Doctrin you see the Text speaks plainly. To this I will adde but one Instance more, which may prove the whole Doctrin, and that you have, *Matth. 19. 16. to 23.* You read there of ones coming to Christ. A young man, a rich man, one, who had great Possessions, and a Ruler too, as Luke expresseth it, *Luk. 18. 18.* All which was rare. A young man! a rich man! a Ruler to come to Christ! you shall read there his business also. He came, not to tempt him, to insnare him; a others did: but to learne of him, to be instructed by him. And

Non animo
tentantis, sed
voto discantis

the

the thing hee desires to bee instructed in, is not some frivolous trifling matter, which others came to Christ withall. But that which was the matter of his inquiry, was a matter of eternal concernment. viz. What hee might do, that hee might bee saved; that hee might inherit everlasting life. Here was something here in this. A young man, a rich man, a Ruler, to come to Christ with desire to bee instructed, how hee should come to eternal life.

You shall now hear Christs answer, vers. 17.-- If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandements. There was some special reason, why Christ makes him such an answer: for in Joh. 6. 28, 29. Christ answers the same question in another manner.

Quærebatur opus,
& Christus
ostendit mandata.

But Christ did here consider the quality of the Person, who demanded. Hee was a Work-monger, and Christ puts him to working. Christ gave him Physick futable to his distemper. Christ puts him to the Commandements, that hee might convince him, in that, to bee imperfect, wherein hee thought himself to bee perfect; and would make that his foil, which hee thought to bee his greatest glory.

Well, Christ having put him upon the Commandements, the young man demands, which of the Commandements; as if hee had said, --- There is none of them, but I have already done.

Christ you see puts him to the Moral Law. Seeing hee will have Heaven and bee justified by Moses; Moses shall bee his Judge, and there rehearseth diverse Precepts of the second Table.

The young man, you see, makes answer in vers. 20. -- All these things have I kept from my youth; what lack I yet? Hast thou any more to command? Is there any more to bee done?

This was now much, hee said. If wee may beleeve him.

1. Hee obeyed. Hee was not only one, who did know the Commandements; but one who kept the Commandements.

2. Hee obeyed universally: not some, but all. -- All these things have I kept.]

3. Hee had obeyed constantly. -- All these things have I kept from my youth.

And sure there was much of truth in what hee said. For it is said upon this -- Christ looked upon him, and loved him, as Mark relates, Mark 10. 21.

No question hee had obeyed the letter of the command: there was none could detect him, but Christ; however, hee failed in the Spirit of the command.

Hee did not break them in the outward action, though hee did not keep them in the inward affection.

And yet for all this, this man was unsound, as hee discovers himself to bee afterward: for all this, this man fell short of Heaven.

And yet alas! How far doth this man excel a thousand of us?

So that you see, the Doctrine plain in the gross, in the bulk, scil. That it is possible for a man to do much in the wayes of God, and yet to be unsound

unsound at heart: to abound in all outward Performances; and yet to miss of Heaven in the end.

But wee'l come to clear it to you, in the Particulars. And wee will follow this Method, in these four Particulars.

1. Wee will clear it to you in diverse instances from the word, that it is possible so to do.

2. Wee will shew how this may stand both

1. With Gods ends.

2. With Satans ends.

3. With mans own ends, To do much, to abound in duty, and yet not to bee sincere.

3. Wee will shew you the grounds, whence it ariseth, that a corrupt heart may abound in all outward Performances.

4. Wee'l shew you where the fault is; how it comes to pass; that all this may bee done, and yet the heart still remain unsound.

In which I shall desire, that they who are men and women of tender spirits, would not presently make conclusions against themselves; and by so doing, gratifie Satan, discourage their own souls, grieve Gods Spirit, and wound and weaken themselves in the wayes of Grace. But hear all, (for I cannot say all at once) and then spare not, but come to conclusions with your selves.

I shall desire so to cast down the unsound, as not to weaken the sincere. And to bring in those that are within, as not to cast down those that are within. So to help the one, as that withall I hurt not the other.

1. For the first then. Wee will clear it in some particulars, that it is possible for a man to do much, to go far in outward performances of duty, and yet to bee rotten at heart, &c.

1. It is possible for a man to hear the word, nay, and hear it often; nay, and abound in hearing, time after time, Sabbath after Sabbath. Nay, and yet more, to hear it with affection too, and yet not to bee sincere.

1. That hee may hear the Word: This is plain, and needs no proof.

2. That hee may hear it often; abound in hearing. This you see here in the Text; and Ezek. 33. 31, 32. where the people frequented to hear Ezekiel. They did not only sometimes, but they heard him often. They did abound in hearing.

3. They may not only hear, and hear often; but hear with affections. Wee read of these four Affections, which were stirred in the hearing of the Word; and that in such, who were unsound.

1. The affection of wonder, and astonishment, which indeed is the Mover of all the affections, Mar. 7. 28. -- When the people heard him, they were astonished at his Doctrine. The like wee read, Mar. 13. 54. Mar. 1. 22. Mark. 11. 18. Luk. 4. 22. All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. -- All wondered; but All were not savingly wrought upon. That is the first.

2. They

2. They may hear it with affections of fear and trembling. Thus you know Felix heard Paul, *Act. 24. 25.* -- When Paul preached of Temperance, and Righteousness, and Judgement to come, Felix trembled. It struck dread and fear into his heart. It set him on trembling.

3. They may hear the word with affections of delight, and some kinde of love. You see in the Text, -- They did delight to know Gods waies, and did delight in approaching to God. And *Ezek. 33. 31, 32.* -- They come and sit before thee, as my people. They hear thy words, and thou art to them as a very lovely song. They hear thy words, but they do them not. With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goes after their Covetousness.

4. They may hear the word, with affection of Joy. It is said of Herod, *Mark 6. 20.* That Herod feared and observed John, and when hee heard him, hee did many things, and heard him gladly. The like you have, *Matth. 13. 20.* -- The stony ground heard the word, and anon with joy received it: yet wanting root in the time of Persecution, they fell away.

So you see the first particular cleared. A man may hear the word; hee may hear it often; abound in hearing: Hee may hear it with affections; and yet his heart may bee unsound.

2. A man may not only hear, but pray too, nay, and make many prayers, abound in praying. Hee may pray in publick, pray in private, pray in the Church, pray in his family, pray in his closet, which last commeth nearer to sincerity, And may make strong cries; Hee may pray with affections, i. e. such affections as sense stirs up; but not such affections as Faith stirs up; such affections as are raised up by some present sting and smart, some trouble and pressure of conscience; though not with such affections as are raised up by Faith; quickned by Gods sanctifying Spirit. Affections of love and desire.

Nay, and they may joyn fasting to Prayer: nay, further, adde mourning to fasting. And yet their hearts may bee unsound.

I cannot stand to clear all the Particulars. The main I shall make to appear to you, in two or three places.

Read *Isa. 1. 15.* -- When you stretch forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers; when you multiply prayer; adde prayer to prayer, as the word imports. -- Yet I will not hear, your hands are full of blood; i. e. you are unregenerate, you are unsound in your spirits.

So that you see a great deal cleared in this. A man may pray; abound in praying; multiply prayers, &c. And yet bee unsound.

And you may joyn fasting to prayer, as you see in the next verse to my Text, and in the example of the Scribes and Pharisees, who prayed often, and fasted often.

And you may joyn mourning to fasting, *Zach. 7. 3.* -- When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month, even these seventy years; did

did you at all fast to mee? even to mee? They served themselves, not God in that action all those seventy years together, *Hos. 7. 14.* -- and they have not cryed to mee with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds; they assembe themselves for Corn and Wine; (that's the ground of their fasting and howling.) For they rebel against mee.

That's the second Particular.

3. A man may seem to bee humbled, to mourn and weep for sin: and yet bee unsound. A man cannot mourn for sin, as sin, but his heart is sincere: but a man may seem to mourn for sin, and yet his heart not bee sincere. Hee may mourn for sin clad with wrath: for sin cloathed with Judgement and Displeasure: for sin, as it smells of Hell, Fire, and Brimstone: for sin, as it appears in its dooms-day attire. So did *Ahab*, so *Judas*.

There are *Crocodile-tears*; There are false tears, as well as false prayers. As a broken heart doth not ever expresse it self in tears: So tears are not ever the expression of a broken heart.

There are

1. *Lachrymæ Indignationis*, tears of Anger, as was *Esaus*.

2. *Lachrymæ Desperationis*, tears of Desperation; such as of the damned in Hell.

3. *Lachrymæ Compassionis*, tears of Compassion; such as were *Christs* for *Jerusalem*.

4. *Lachrymæ Compunctionis*, tears of godly sorrow and Compunction.

Such tears they may expresse as sense and smart stirs up, but not such as Faith and Love do raise up in the soul.

4. A man may seem to do much; walk in many wayes of duty; go far in the outward shew of obedience, the letter of command: and yet his spirit bee unsound.

A man may do so much, spin a thread so finely, as they, who have the most discerning spirit, are not able to detect and discover him.

Hee may deceive the men of the world; hee may deceive the Saints; deceive the Devil; hee may deceive himself.

Wee read of *Zeuxes the Painter*. Hee drew Grapes so to the life, that hee deceived the Birds; they would come flying to them, as though they had been real Grapes.

Dedalus, hee made an Image by art, that moved of it self; inso-much that men beleevved it had been alive.

But *Pigmalion* made an Image so lively, that hee deceived himself, and taking the Picture for a Person, fell in love with his own Picture.

So there are some, who can spin so fine a thread, limb out the picture of godliness so to the life, that not only the men of the World, but even the Saints, who are of most discerning spirits; nay, and themselves may bee deceived and deluded.

5. A man may cast up his vomit, disgorge himself of all his former wayes, his old lusts and sins; hee may bee washed, that is,

N n

outwardly

outwardly reformed in every thing, hee may leave many sins, and yet bee unsound.

You see this plain, in 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22. And there is nothing more plain, than that a man may leave sin, and yet not hate sin.

Hee may leave sin either

1. Ex timore mali alicujus.
2. Ex tadio.
3. Ex amore mali alicujus oppositi.
4. Ex deficientia organorum.

1. Out of fear of evil.

2. Out of weariness of it.

3. Out of love of some contrary sin.

4. Out of want of fit instrument and means, to compass his sin.

6. A man may accompanie himself with the People of God. Saul may bee among the Prophets: Judas, Demas, Simon-Magus, among the Disciples and Apostles. A man may get on Sheeps-cloathing, accompany, go in and out with the Sheep; bee folded with the Sheep; and yet bee no better than a Ravenous Wolf.

There are Tares as well as Wheat in Gods Field; there is Chaff as well as Corn in Gods Floar, bad Fishes as well as good in Gods net. And unsound as well as sound Gospellers in the Church of God.

7. Nay, A man may not only do, but suffer too, and yet bee unsound. Hee may suffer in his Goods, Hee may suffer in his Good-name, Hee may bee nicknamed as others are, hee may suffer in his Body: An evil heart may suffer in a good cause. Every one that beareth Christ's Cross upon his shoulders, doth not consequently bear him in his heart. Wolves may suffer in Sheeps-cloathing. Sufferings may overtake them, that have nothing but the cloak of profession. As Jehoshaphat was taken for Ahab: So may an Ahab bee taken for a Jehoshaphat. Times may come, that it may cost a man as dearly for wearing the Livery of Christ, as for wearing Christ himself: for unsound profession of Christ, as for the sincere.

To summe up all, Though an unsound spirit bee not able to do any thing, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian; Though hee cannot do any of those works which are good *propter fieri*, in regard of the act, the goodness whereof doth adhere intrinsically, and cleave to the thing done: as to Love God, fear God, trust in God: Yet all these works, the goodness whereof doth more consist in the Manner, than in the Matter, or thing done; viz. to pray, read, hear, &c. In all these they may abound.

And this seems to bee implied in the Apostles phrase, 2 Tim. 3. 5. -- Having a form of godliness, yet denying the power: From such turn away. Where, by the form of godliness, which the Apostle grants they may have; there are two things which are implied.

1. That no unsound spirit hath any thing in it, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian, or which makes a Christian, a Christian. As a Form and Picture hath nothing in it, which is *de Essentiâ Hominis*: nothing which is essential to a man. There is no Reason, no Understanding, no Life in it: So an Hypocrite, hee hath nothing that

that is *Essential* to a *Christian*, as a *Christian*. Hee hath nothing which doth constitute and make a *Christian* a *Christian*.

As wee say of God; Hee hath his *communicable* and *incommunicable Attributes*; something which is in *himself* only; as his *Infinite* ness, his *Omnipresence*, &c. and something whereof there is a *Resemblance*, some footsteps in the *Creatures*: so the *Saints*, they have something which is *communicable*; something whereof there is some resemblance in others, and which others do as well as they; though not in the same *Manner*. And there is something *incommunicable* to any but to *Saints*; such things as are *proper* and *Peculiar* to the *Saints* only. And they are such things as are *Essential* to a *Christian*, as a *Christian*. And that is the first thing implied in the word [*Form*.]

2. A second thing, which is implied in it is, *That a false Professor may have a compleat Resemblance of a Christian in all those things, which are not essential to a Christian, as a Christian*. Hee may have a *form of godliness*; that is, *all the outward lineaments of godliness*: Hee may bee a *compleat Picture of a Christian* from top to toe; in every member, every limb, every duty for the *outwards* of it. This is implied in the word (*Form*.)

As a *Picture*, if it were not perfect in every limb, if there wanted any member, as an *Hand*, an *Eye*; nay but a *Finger*, it could not bee said to bee a *compleat Picture*: so is it here. If there bee a want in any thing, even in the least duty, for the *outward part* of Religion, if hee do not all for the *Externals*, which a *Christian* doth; hee cannot bee said to bee a *compleat Form*, a *compleat Picture of a godly man*. And therefore these two things are implied in the word (*Form*.)

1. *That no Hypocrite hath any thing in him essential to a Christian*; no more than a *Picture*, that which is essential to a man.

2. *That there is a compleat Resemblance of a Christian in all the outward lineaments of Godliness*.

Hee may bee able to do all the *outwards*; every duty for the *externals*, which lies within the latitude and compass of a *Christians* walking with God.

Thus the first thing is cleared to you. Now wee come to the second thing propounded.

2. *How it may stand with*

1. *Gods ends.*

2. *Satans ends.*

3. *A mans own ends, to abound in duty, and yet not bee sincere.*

1. *It may stand with Gods ends, both*

1. *Towards the Good, and they are merciful ends.*

2. *Towards the Bad, and they are partly merciful; and partly judicial.*

1. *It may stand with Gods ends towards the good, and those are merciful*

ends. That God may serve his own Glory by them, for the *bringing in*, and *building up* of the *godly*.

God makes use of the parts and abilities of some, whose persons hee will not own, for the advancement of the work of grace, in the hearts of his people.

The *Raven* was an *unclean* Creature under the Law: yet God made use of the *Raven*, to bring flesh and food to *Elijah*. Though the *Raven* was not *good meat*, yet it was *good meat* which the *Raven* brought.

So God doth oftentimes make use of such, who are in themselves *unclean*, for the feeding and nourishing of his people. The food may be *good*, though the person that brings it may be *naught*.

This is that *Christ* told the people, *Matth. 23. 2, 3.* *The Scribes and Pharisees, they sit in Moses chair: and therefore whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do yee not after their works: for they say, but do not.* As if *Christ* had said. *They are set up, and furnished with abilities, to do you good, though they are naught themselves: Therefore let their Doctrine build you up, for it is of God: and let not their practice throw you down, for that is of the Devil, and themselves.*

The *Pearl* in the *Toads head* may be useful and good, though the *Body* be poison. And the abilities of such men may be serviceable to you, though their persons be *unclean*.

Thus may it stand with Gods ends toward the good, that corrupt hearts should abound in all the ways of duty. And this is one end, for the advancement of the work of Grace, in the hearts of his people.

Though this be not their aim, though it be not their end; yet it is Gods end. They have theirs, and God hath his end.

As it is said of the *King of Assyria*, *Isa. 10. 5, 6, 7.* God used him for a rod and scourge to punish his people. God had his end, and hee had his. It was Gods end, that hee should spoil and punish them for their sin: but his, to enrich himself by the spoil; as the Text tells us. Howbeit, *Though I send him, to punish them for their sins* (saith God) *yet hee, the King of Assyria, meaneth not so, nor doth his heart think so: it is in his heart to cut off, and destroy Nations, not a few.* Though hee served his own ends, yet Gods end went forward also.

The like of *Fehu*, hee served his own ends, in the destruction of *Ahabs* house. Though hee cries out, *Come see my Zeal for the Lord.* However Gods ends were brought about also, in the ruine of *Ahabs* posterity, as hee had threatened.

So here. Though it be not the end of corrupt hearts, in the doing of holy actions, *Prayer, Pleading, Exhortation, &c.* to bring God any Glory, to do good to others, they have their own ends. Yet still Gods work goes forward in it. God hath his ends, as well

well as they theirs. God gets Glory, as well as they credit. God makes sin, the Devil himself, to serve his Glory. Otherwise hee would not suffer nor Devil, nor Sin, to bee in the World. So that hee makes them, in aiming at themselves, to bring about his Glory.

As an *unsound spirit* doth serve his turn of God: so God again serves his turn of them: hee is even with them.

God oftentimes useth such to bee instruments to do others good, who are bad themselves: to work upon others, though they themselves remain unwrought upon: to bee a Bridge to help others over.

To hold out the *Lanthorne* to others, and go in the dark themselves. As it often fareth with them, who hold the *Lanthorne*, they go most in the dark themselves, they serve others, direct and guide others in the night with their light, not themselves. So if God do not bring light into their hearts: there are none, who are more in darkness, than such as hold out the light to others: yet

Another may receive good, by that Sermon, which the Preacher himself is never the better for: another, warmth by that prayer, whereby hee himself that prayes, is never the hotter. And so in the rest. And therefore it may stand with Gods ends, that *corrupt hearts should abound in duties*.

2. *God suffers corrupt hearts to abound in duties, to maintain an holy jealousy and watchfulness in the hearts of his own people.* Why (will they reason) if men may do thus much, and yet bee unsound, what need have wee then to bee jealous over our own hearts, watchful over our spirits in the midst of our performances?

Oh! this will make a man jealous of himself, with a godly jealousy: not to trust too much to himself, when hee's at best, when hee doth most abound in duties. And this holy jealousy is of special use to keep us humble, to make us watchful, exact in our wayes, to fence our hearts against Hypocrisie. It was never known that a jealous heart was a false heart. An holy jealousy over a mans spirit was never accompanied with an unsound spirit.

3. A third End. It is, *to make us see there is something in duty, more than duty, which sets a value upon duty, and makes it of worth.*

If all were sound, who did duty, wee should then think duty itself to bee all; whereas now it makes us look after something else, above duty.

This will make a man look to the *Manner*, as well as to the *Matter*, when wee see the *Matter* is nothing worth, without the right *Manner* do accompany it.

This will force a mans heart above duty. God never made *Duty* the end of *Duty*. If all were sound that *did Duty*, wee should rest upon a bare performance of *Duty*, and look no higher.

But now, seeing it is possible for a man to abound in *Duty*, and yet

yet bee *unsound*, this will force a mans heart above the *Duty*.

4. To tell us, that *there are other things to bee done of a Christian, than meerly to pray, hear, &c.*

If a man may do all, and *sink into Hell*, when hee hath done: then sure there is more required of those that must bee *saved*.

All *Religion* doth not lye in a few *Prayers, Hearing of Sermons*. Though this must bee done, they have not so much as a shew of good ness, whoneglect these: yet there are other things to bee done too, if ever wee would *come to Heaven*.

5. God suffers corrupt hearts to *abound in duty*, so make his people more *sollicitous after surer, more stable, and proving evidences*, than these are.

If these anchors should alwayes hold, men would never labour to cast out better. If all, that *did dutie*, nay, that *did abound in duty* had been *sound*, wee should never have sought out for better evidences than these are.

Whereas, this being discovered, that a man may *abound in duty*, and yet for all this bee *unsound*: this will make a man to look out for *better evidences*.

A man that is bent for Heaven indeed, will never suffer his soul to rest, till hee hath gotten some such evidences, as are *incompatible to a man out of Christ*.

Why, will hee say, *May a man hear, and go to Hell? pray, and perish? do duty, and yet bee damned at last? Then these are not sufficient bottomes for mee, to build the weight of my everlasting soul upon. I must either get a better bottom, surer evidences than these, or both I and my prayers may sink together at last.*

Whatever another man may do, or have, and yet bee *unsound*, will not bee sufficient to him, to clear, that hee doing, or having that, is *sound*.

And this now fires them out of their formalities, makes them look out for such evidences, as do accompany *salvation*; As the Apostle saith, *Heb. 6. 9.*

2. As it may stand with Gods ends to the good: so it may stand with Gods ends to the bad.

1. *His Merciful ends.*

2. *His Judicial ends.*

His Merciful ends, to bring in those who belong to the *Election of Grace*; making them often serviceable to these purposes.

His Judicial ends, towards such as are *Cast awayes*; and that for the further strengthening of the prejudice, and rooted dislike, that wicked men have against the wayes of God.

Why, will wicked men say: others, who have been as forward in profession, as great *Prayers*, and as great *Hearers* as you are, they have proved *unsound*, discovered themselves to bee *Hypocrites*, and so are you, and all the rest of you.

And

And thus you see it turns to them, as an occasion of offence, and further strengthening of their dislike of the wayes and people of God. Men, whose hearts are set against the wayes of God, shall bee furnisht with matter enough to bring them into further dislike daily.

If you desire to have arguments against Gods wayes, you shall have enough of them to your cost. You shall bee furnisht with them; but to your further hardening. If you will keep a rooted dislike of the wayes of God, you shall finde enough in the World to nourish it. If you bee willing to bee offended, you shall have offences enough to your further hardening. If you bee willing to stumble at the wayes of God, you shall have stumbling stones enough.

Christ himself, who was the Corner stone, Elect, Precious; yet to the Disobedient hee was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. A stone as well for the Fall, as for the rising of many in Israel, 1 Pet. 2. 8. Isa. 8. 14. Rom. 9. 33. Luk. 2. 34.

Men that are willing to take offences, shall have them. Those who will bee blinde, shall bee blinded. They, who will bee hardened, shall have hardening enough. If the Word do not teach you, works do blinde you. If the Word do not soften you, works do harden you. If you stumble at the Word, you will fall at works.

Indeed, Men first stumble at the Word, before they stumble at Works: They first take offence at duties the Word commands, and then strengthen that offence, by the failings of those, who walk in those wayes.

Works do but strengthen your dislike of things in the Word. The failings of persons, that walk in this way, do but further strengthen your dislike of the things commanded in the Word. This the Apostle shews, 1 Pet. 2. 8. Christ was a stone of stumbling. But to whom? why to those, who stumbled at the Word first. After they have stumbled at the Word, then they stumble at Christ. So when you have stumbled, and taken offence against these duties, which the Word commands; no marvel if you stumble here; and by the failings of those, who walk in the way of life, gather arguments to strengthen your dislike of the way it self.

This is thy spirit; though thou see it not. Thy heart is opposite to the wayes of God, praying, hearing, fasting; and thou furnishest thy self with instances of some, who have proved unsound in the way, that so thou mayest strengthen thy heart more with dislike against it.

And thus it proves an occasion of further blinding, of further hardening to thee.

Thus you see the first, *How it may stand with Gods ends, that corrupt hearts should abound in duty.*

2, It may stand also with Satans ends.

1. It may stand with Satans ends, towards the good.

2. It

2. *It may stand with Satans ends, towards the World.*
3. *It may stand with Satans ends, towards themselves.*
1. *It may stand with Satans ends, towards the good; and therefore hee will not disturb these men in their way, but lets them go on.*

1. *Hereby Satan doth labour to cause Gods People to throw off the work; to desist in their way. Why, will Satan say, what do you macerate and afflict your selves in a way, wherein is no more good? What can you do more than others have done? They have prayed, and they have prayed often, and made many Prayers. They have heard, and heard often; yea and heard with affection, with fear, with joy, and delight, &c. They have fasted, and have joynd mourning with fasting. They have forsaken their evil wayes, wherein they have formerly walked; and have entred upon Gods wayes, joynd themselves to the Ordinances, to the People of God. And yet, for all this, these people have come to nought. For all this, their hearts were unsound here, and they have perished after all. And therefore (will Satan say) If a man may pray, and perish; do duties, and bee damned; hear, and get to Hell at last; why dost thou then thus trouble thy self, and afflict thy self in this way? Thou seest there is no hope of doing good in it. And therefore, why wilt thou abridge thy self of those pleasures, those comforts, which others have in the World? why wilt thou go on to macerate and afflict thy self in these wayes? were it not better for thee to throw off all, and betake thyself to the World, to profitt, to pleasures, and enjoy thy hearts content as well as others?*

Thus you see Satan is furnished with a dangerous argument against Gods People, which hee could not have had, if unsound hearts did not abound in duty, &c.

2. *If hee cannot prevail with Gods People hereby, to throw off the work; but that notwithstanding all this, they are resolved to pray, though they perish; to beleeve, to obey, though God should never reward their obedience; yet hee hath a second End.*

Hee labours to discourage Gods People hereby in the work, and to make them drive heavily in their way to Heaven. Satan knows full well, that if their heart bee discouraged in the work, their hands will bee weakened for the work. And therefore hee labours, by such presidents as these are, who have done so much in the wayes of God, and yet are unsound; to make men sit down discouraged, and despair of ever doing good in these wayes.

Why, will Satan say, How canst thou do more, than such and such have done? Canst thou pray more Prayers? hear more Sermons? do more Duties? keep more Dayes? ingage thy self more deeply in the Cause of God, than others have done? who have yet come to nought.

It may bee hee'll tell thee. Thou art weak, thou wantest those parts, those abilities, that strength, that power to do God that services,

"service, which others have done. And therefore e'ne cast off all,
"or else despair of ever doing good, in this way; wherein others
"have outstript thee, and yet were unsound.

Thus doth Satan make use of this argument, if not to prevail
with men, to cast off the work, yet to discourage them in the work; And
therefore it may stand with his ends, that unsound hearts may thus
abound in performance of duties.

3. A third end which Satan hath towards the godly, is, that if
hee cannot prevail to make Gods people throw off the work, nor
yet discourage them in the work, yet hee labours by these men to
scandalize the godly, to bring evil reports upon all that walk in the way
of life.

It is Satans desire to make the Persons that walk in the way of
life, and the way of life it self as odious as hee can, in the eyes of
the World. And this is one way, whereby hee labours to bring is-
about, and findes successful in the hearts of many: even the fail-
ings of such as have made profession of the Truth.

Indeed the Cause of God, and the People of God have suffered
much thereby.

You know how wicked men argue.

1. Either from Particulars to Generals: from the failings of some,
they fall to censuring of all. There is one (say they) who hath made
profession, and hath proved naught. Therefore all are so: all alike:
none better than other.

Which yet is an uncharitable and false reasoning. If the Saints
should argue so of you: There was one unregenerate man a Murder-
er, a Traitor, a Thief: Therefore all that are unregenerate are Trai-
tors, Murderers, Thieves: you would think this to bee uncharitable
and false reasoning. Yet yours is the same.

2. Or secondly, By the failing of the Person, they take up argu-
ments to charge and condemn the Cause: not only Professors, but
Profession it self; casting filth and dirt upon the pure face of Religi-
on, and the wayes of God hereby.

And Satan knows well enough, that the Cause of God looseth
more by one mans unsoundness, than it can gain and recover again
by the sincerity of many. It looseth more in the hearts of wicked
men, by the falls of some, than it can gain again by the standing of
thousands.

Dauids fall, though hee rose again, caused Religion; and the
Wayes of God to bee blasphemed by wicked men. It opened the
mouths of wicked men to blaspheme the wayes of God, as the
Prophet told him.

And indeed, God was more dishonoured by Dauids unclean-
ness, than hee was by all the filth of Sodome. And therefore
seeing Satan gets such advantage both against the Persons; and a-
gainst the Cause of God, by the unsoundness of men, that walk in the
Wayes of God: therefore may it stand with Satans ends to suffer
O o and will bring upon us unsound

unsound hearts, to abound in duty, without disturbing of them. And as it may stand with Satans ends, in respect of the godly; So

2. It may stand with his Ends, in respect of the World.

1. To keep them off, from entering upon the way of life.

Men will bee afraid to engage themselves in such a way, wherein there stand up such sad Presidents, as these are. If men may do much, and yet fall off, bee unsound, and fall short of Heaven at last; this will discourage and dishearten them, from continuing in.

Men are naturally afraid, when they are to run hazards and dangers: to take a great deal of pains in such a way, wherein there are so many hazards and dangers to bee run.

2. To strengthen the prejudice of wicked men against the wayes and people of God.

Wicked men are naturally prejudiced against the wayes and people of God. They think them all to bee no better than others, however they make a shew to bee better. And when they see this prejudice of theirs confirmed by the example of any one, who hath walked in the way, and yet hath been unsound: This is a matter laid up for ever, here they hugge themselves, and rejoyce in such an example: and so their prejudice against Gods wayes and people is hereby more strengthened.

3. A third End, which Satan hath towards wicked men, is, hereby to harden them, and confirm and strengthen them in a way of sin.

When they see no better fruit of so much praying, hearing, &c. They are hardened in their way of sin, and persuaded to go off in their old way, their common road still.

Thus you see, how it may stand with Satans ends towards the good, and towards the bad.

3. Now thirdly, How it may stand with Satans ends towards themselves, that thus abound in duty, and yet are unsound.

1. To aggravate their condemnation. Such mens sins they are great. Duty doubles sin. A duty upon the head of a sin makes sin exceeding hainous. And as the sin, so the condemnation is aggravated hereby.

The darkest and hottest places in Hell, are reserved for such, whose hearts are unsound in the wayes of God. Such would wish to change places with Turks and Heathens, all their duties are but so much fuel to make the fire of Hell the hotter for them.

By how much such men are lifted up higher than others in appearance; by so much they shall bee thrown down lower than others in truth and reality of torments.

2. Because such men are surest his, of any, upon two grounds.

1. If hee stand in that condusion, hee thinks hee is sure enough his. What can rob him of such a man? can Prayer? can Hearing? Indeed these might deprive him of others: but this man he dares trust any where, upon any duty: Hee dares venture him any where: Hee knows his heart is Prayer-Proof, Sermon-Proof. All these are not strong enough to take him away from him.

In-

Indeed, hee's affraid of others, though never so wicked. Hee fears hee may loose him at every Sermon, hee may bee robbed of him, at every prayer. And therefore labours all hee can, to keep such men off from the work.

But now this man hee dares adventure to the most powerfull and prevailing ordinances. Hee hath long experience, his heart hath stood firm to him in all.

Though sometimes hee hath had some stings and troubles of conscience, as certainly it fares often with unsound hearts, who have to do with duties: yet hee can let him alone, hee knows hee will come to his old temper, and return to himself again.

As hot water will return to its own coldness, because there is a quality in it, which resists heat, and inclines to cold: so if at any time such a man bee troubled, Satan will let him alone, hee knows there is a Principle in him, which will cause him to return to his wonted temper.

If hee fall, hee thinks him sure enough his nob is not gone.

Such mens falls are for the most part desperate, and unrecoverable. You know, the greater the height, from which a man falls, the more desperate and irrecoverable is his fall.

Now there can bee no greater an height in the World, from which to fall, than for a man to fall from the Hills of duty, the Mountains of Prayer, the top of profession. This may prove the irrecoverable downfall.

All thy Duties, all thy Prayers, if thy heart bee unsound, are but something laid in, to make that sin, still worse, do but ripen and prepare for, and nimble thee, to commit that sin, if thy heart bee unsound in them.

But if the fall bee not desperate, yet it is dangerous: though not irrecoverable, yet hard to bee recovered.

There are many and fearful aggravations of your sins, all which Satan now useth, and sets on with all his might, to bring you to despair. And great is the hazard, hard is the recovery.

It hath been often known, a sincere heart hath recovered and gotten ground and strength by his fall. But seldome or never that an unsound heart got up again after his Fall, never came to his heights, but rather wallows in mischief. David fell and recovered, but Judas fell, and rose no more.

But however, the hazard is great, in regard there are so many fearful aggravations of sin,

Their sins are sins against Knowledge, Light, Illumination, which puts much weight to sin.

Sins of ignorance plead for a pardon, though great. What greater than the killing of Christ? yet our Father forgives them, for they know not what they do: But sins against Knowledge do exceedingly aggravate sin, and makes sin exceeding sinful.

There is more sin, more guilt formerly considered, in a sinfull

full thought against *Knowledge*, than there is in an *open gross sin of ignorance*. Why, their sins are sins against Knowledge, against Conscience, against Profession, Practice, Prayers, Duties; and therefore great.

All their Duties and Prayers that they have done should bee now comforts, but they are burdens; because they are done with *unsound hearts*; and they come in as so many aggravations of sin against them.

Whilst a man holds up his head in the World, though hee bee but poor, it may bee his Creditors will let him alone; but if once a man bee arrested, every one then comes with his action upon him; may bee, those hee thought his best friends, come then, and lay greatest burdens upon him.

Whilst an unsound man walks in way of duty, and doth not fall into the commission of some grosse sin, so long it may bee, hee hath quier. Satan, Conscience, nothing troubles him. But when once hee is down, then all comes upon him: nay his very Duties themselves (which hee thought to have most good from, and to bee his best friends) they come in too, to lay more weight, more guilt, more burden on him. Every Prayer, every Duty, which hee hath done with an unsound heart, is now a burden, a weight, upon his spirit; yea, and weighes heavier than all the rest.

Here is trouble out of expected comfort, which is the *greatest trouble*. And take this with you, and remember it.

Whatever you do in the wayes of God, if comfort flow not from it, trouble will one day rise out of it. If it bee not a bottome for Faith, Satan will use it as an argument for Despair, when time serves. I say, that duty that is done, and cannot minister comfort, by the *sincerity* of the heart, in doing of it, will one day create discouragement, and strengthen Despair. Despair ariseth from that, where comfort should; but doth not arise.

But I am too long upon this. This is the second ground, why Satan doth not disturb such men.

3. It may stand yet further with Satans ends, and therefore hee doth not disturb them; because hee hopes to have some further good of them another day. Hee knows full well, that they, who will serve God for *their own ends*, will serve the Devil for *their own ends* too, when hee once out-bids God, and exceeds him in his tenders. It is an easy thing to make him the Devils Priest, who is, *Mammons Chaplain*. You see Demas, hee was unsound, served God for *By-ends*, for worldly respects. And the Devil doth but out-bid God, tender more for his service; and hee presently forsakes God, and cleaves to the World. Hee forsook the Faith of Christ, and turned to bee an *Idol-Priest* at Thessalonica, as Dorotheus reports of him.

This is a sure Rule. Hee who serves God for the World, will serve the Devil for the World. Hee who serves God for little, will serve

serve the Devil for more; hee will easily bee brought upon higher tenders, to change his Master.

I say, men, that have no minde to the *Work*, nor love to the *Master*, but the eye is *only to the wages*; such men will quickly bee drawn upon greater offers, to forsake their *Master*, and their *Work* too, and to joyn themselves to any, where *better wages* may bee found.

And you must know. *There are no men, whose service the Devil doth more desire, than the service of such, who have made profession.* And that upon diverse reasons.

1. Hee knows, *They will bee the surest, and most trusty servants to him of any.* None are more trusty souldiers, than such, who have forsaken the *colours of the Lord*, and fled over to the *Tents of Satan*. Such men hee never fears to loose again: their *Ears are boared*, in token of eternal subjection to this *black Prince of darkness*.

As wee say of the *Angels*. *If once they turn, they never return.* There is no possibility of their repenting. And this is one ground; because their will hath sinned against such excellent, clear and eminent light, that they can never return again; if all that light would not keep their desperate hearts from sinning, it shall never prevail with them for returning, when once they have sinned. And God will never give a fuller, a greater light, and therefore they must needs bee fixt in their condition of sin.

So I may say of these in some degree. *They have sinned against so clear light, such manifest evidence, that if they turn, sin wilfully.* Hardly do they return again. It is no more but what the *Apostle* saith, in that sixth and tenth to the *Hebrews*. And therefore these must needs bee trusty servants to the *Devil*, they are sure his.

They are his *by choice*. And none surer his, than they, who are his *by choice*. Now such men, they have chosen him; nay and not only chosen him, but they have chosen him upon *experience* and *dislike of their former Master*.

If indeed a man should have chosen *Satan*, before ever hee had *tryed God*, then were there some hopes that his mind might bee altered, hee might repent of his choice. But when a man hath had a *tryal of God*, and upon *experience and dislike of God*, and his wayes, chuserh *Satan* and the world; these are sure.

Besides, these men have *sold themselves over to Satan*. Now none are more sure his, than they, who sell themselves over to him.

Indeed, wee are all sold in *Adam*, as the *Apostle* saith. -- *Sold to sin*. But now when a man shall come, and not only ratifie the bargain, but *make a new sale of himself*; This man is *sure his*. It is not so much what the *Father* hath done, but when the *Son* comes to age, and shall ratifie what the *Father* hath done, and *make a new Sale*;

Sale : Nay, Satan doth not only know they are sure his, but hee knows they will bee most usefull Instruments for him, and by these things are they strengthened and prepared for his service; and therefore hee will not disturb them. Hee knows they will by this, bee made better *Engineers* to work for him. They will bee active instruments, full of malice against God, and his cause.

Who of all the Emperors was more milchievous than *Fulian*, who had once made profession of *Christ*. Such men as these are set on fire of Hell.

Wee have a Proverb. *An English man Italianate,
Is a Devil Incarnate.*

I may say the same; *A Professor Apostate,
Turns a Devil Incarnate.*

There are none in the World have more of the *Infernal Nature*, than they. *Their Head poisons, their Heart poisons. And the venom of Aspes is under their Tongue.* They are full of Hell.

There is some *ingenuity* in *Nature* fallen, though never so bad, But *Nature* once raised, and after *Devilized*: such men are all *fury*. These are Satans *Mogols*, Satans *Champions*, the chiefest of that *black band of Darknes*: Such men as these, they have sinned away *Light, Conscience, all natural remorse and tenderness*. And what can bee expected from them: there is no mans sword more sharp and keen than theirs, who have sharpened it upon the threshold of God. No mans pen writes so bitterly against God, his Cause and People, than theirs, who have dip'd their pen, in the *Blood of Conscience*. No man falls more desperately to Hell, than such a man, who hath made *Shipwrack of Conscience*.

And therefore, seeing such men are so trusty, so sure, so active, so malicious instruments, when they are brought over to him, and it is so easy a thing to bring them about, no marvel if Satan will not disturb such men for a time, but lets them go on, till they bee fit for his work. It will stand with the designs of his own Kingdome.

Thus I have shewed two things, how it may stand, 1. With Gods, 2. With Satans ends.

3. Now thirdly, *How it may stand with their own ends, who having corrupt hearts, yet should notwithstanding abound in duty.*

1. *To answer the calls of Conscience.*

Every man hath a *Conscience*. And every mans *Conscience* doth call upon him for the performance of something. And the further conscience is *inlightened*, the further work it calls him out upon. A man inlightened cannot serve God so cheaply, with quiet of *Conscience*, as others, who are not, can.

Now there are some, who are far convinced, some, who are further inlightened than others. And conscience calls out upon them, for more work to bee done. And to answer the meer calls of *Conscience*, a man far inlightened may do much in the wayes of God;

God; and yet his spirit bee unsound.

2. To pacifie the quarrels, to satisfie the gripes and gnawings of conscience.

It is usual with men under the pangs and stings of conscience, To run to the springs of duty, to the plaisters of prayer, meerly for this end, To get present ease, and quiet to their burdened Consciences. And they often compass their end by this means; and get some present ease; though not a settled and substantial Peace. Such as their disturbance is, such is their Peace. As their disturbance was not spiritual for sin: so their Peace, it is not spiritual arising from a cure. As conscience was wounded by walking to that common light, and natural Principles in it: So is it put in joynt again, by walking answerable to them, which works, though but common and general, yet being all their light discovers, they may, by the performance of them, get some present ease, though not a sound and settled Peace.

Wee read, *The Heathens had stings of Conscience*, when they sinned notoriously against the Light and Principles of Nature. And wee read, *they had Peace and quiet*, when they observed those things, which their light discovered to them.

As their Terrors did arise from *Convictions of Conscience*, upon the doing of such things as were contrary to the Principles of Nature: so their Peace did arise from the observance of such things as were agreeable to that common Light and Principles they had. So it is here. Their *Conviction* doth arise from some *Common, not saving Lights*.

1. Because it discovers *gross sins, not secret sins*.
2. It discovers *open sins, not spiritual sins*.
3. It discovers *no sin, as sin, in the Nature of it*. Some sins it discovers not at all.

And so their Peace doth arise from some *common Performances*, some *general works*, not *special and saving*. And this is one end, why some may abound in outward Performances, to make themselves a *Plaister of the ingredients of Prayers and Duties*, to heal their wounded consciences.

I have sometimes thought that *Conscience* in this case, is something like to the disease which they call the *Wolf* in the body. If you feed not it, they are wont to say, *It will feed upon you*. And therefore in this case it is said, they used to give it *flesh*, that so, by feeding on that, it might not gnaw upon them; and by that means have some present ease, though the cure bee not wrought.

So it is with *Conscience*. When once the mouth of *Conscience* is opened, if a man do not feed it, it will devour him. And therefore men in this case do feed *Conscience* with *duty*, which for present, procures them ease, though the cure bee not wrought.

And indeed (to speak truth) such men do not desire the cure. They desire ease, but not the cure; *Peace*; not *Purging*; *Quiet*, not

Hea-

Healing. They would willingly bee rid of the *pain*, but keep the *Tooth*: of *Trouble*, but keep the *sin*: of the *evil caused*, not of the *evil causing*. The *cure* would bee as *deadly* to them as the *wound*; to part with the *sin*, as to indure the *smart*.

And therefore, seeing there is a *middle-way* to bee gone, that they may procure their *present Peace*, and yet keep their *sin*: They will go that way, and labour to still the clamours of *Conscience*, by *bribing it with Duty*, *feeding it with Prayers*; that so they may procure *Peace*, and yet keep their *sins*.

Other ends there are, which are more low than the former.

1. *For Ostentation and Pride of Gifts.*

A corrupt heart may have the *Gift of Prayer*, though not the *Grace of Prayer*; yea, and bee more eminent therein, than they, who have the *Grace of Prayer*. They may exceed others in *expressions*, who yet do exceed them in *affections*. And for *Pride, Ostentation in Gifts*, A corrupt heart may abound in duties and performances.

2. *For Affection, Credit, esteem of the World.* That they may bee accounted *holy men*; to have a *Name*, they are living, when yet they are dead men.

3. *For the advancement of their worldly designs.* By this craft they have all their gain. It may bee *this fills their shops, fills their houses, &c.* *Godliness is great gain*: and some make a gain of *godliness*.

Quanta no-
bis divitias,

Now there are vile wretches, who make *God, Religion, holy duties*, to serve their own base ends; who make them but a *stalking-horse*, the better to pursue their own game, their own gain. Like *Water-men*, who row one way, but look another. They row towards *Heaven* in outward works, with the *Oar of Religion*; but they look towards the *World*, their own ends, in heart. Their eyes are after their gain. -- *Who will shew them any good?* Their feet are going toward *Zoar*, with *Lot's Wife*; but their heart toward *Sodome*. They serve *God* with their bodies, but *Mammon* with their spirits.

4. That by this means, *They might procure Gods blessing on them in this life.* Oh! think they, if I do not pray, *God will not bless mee in my shop to day, &c.* And therefore do it, to procure *Wealth*.

Wee read the *Sadduces*, (who denied that there was any *Angel, or Spirit, or Resurrection*; and so by consequent, all reward of any service after this life) being thereupon demanded, why they did then keep the *Commandments*; they answered. -- *That it might go well with them in this life.*

So there are some, whose thoughts go no higher, than that *God would bless them, God would bestow upon them these belly-blessings.* As they sell *God for gain*, so they serve *God for gain*.

With these, many other ends might bee laid down, why a corrupt

rupt heart may abound in outward performances. But thus much bee said for the second.

We have two other things to do more, before wee come to Application.

1. To shew you, what are the grounds, that a corrupt heart may so abound in outward performance.

2. Where the fault is. Or how it comes to pass, that a man may do thus much in the wayes of God, and yet bee unsound; yet miss of Heaven at last. Wee will begin with the first of these two, which is the third thing propounded.

3. *What the grounds are, whence it ariseth, that a corrupt heart may abound in outward Performances.*

1. The first ground is, *Natural Conscience*, or that *Inbred Light*, which is in the conscience of men by nature.

Every man hath a *Conscience* in him; and this *Conscience* doth acknowledge, *that there is a God, one, who is Being of Beings, Cause of Causes*: and not only so, but thereupon, *that this God is to bee worshiped and served by the Creature.*

Though *Conscience* cannot discover the *True God*, or the *True Worship*; yet it doth conclude, *there is a God*; and that *this God is to bee worshiped.*

Atheists in practice wee have many; every Parish is full of them. Such as the Apostle speaks of, *Tit. i. 16.* -- *Who profess they know God, but yet in works they deny him.* But *Atheists* in Judgement "none can bee. Hence Tully the Heathen could say. -- *I have known men without King, Laws, Government, Cloaths, but none so savage, but have a God.*

Many have indeavoured to blow out that light, but never could. Wee read of *Caligula*, who laboured all hee could to blow out this candle, and to strengthen his *Atheisme* by Arguments and Reasons; yet when it thundred, hee ran under a Bed; his fears and guilty conscience telling him of some divine Power, which hee could not withstand.

Another, who laboured the like; and though hee had wrought out all *Faith*, yet hee had not wrought out all *Fears*. Hee still feared (as hee would say) *that there was a God*; -- And, what if there should prove to bee a God, at last!

Now then, there being such light in *Conscience*, as to discover *there is a God*: and conscience thereupon concluding, *this God must bee worshiped*; by the help of further light, the *Light of the Word*, the *Light of the Works*, the *Light of good Example*, the *Light of good Education*, together with the implantation of some common and general Principles, whereby conscience is strengthened from above: A man may bee inabled to do much in the wayes of godliness, and yet his heart continue unsound, without any spiritual Principle of Grace wrought in him.

2. A second ground is, *some present distress and trouble upon the*

Conscience, or upon the Bodies of men; upon the spirit or flesh of men.

1. *Some present distress upon the spirit of a man.* It may bee Conscience is now for present, *upon the rack.* God hath let in a beam of light into the conscience, by the Law, and discovered a mans sin. And with that light hath let fall a spark of his wrath due to sin, upon the conscience; which hath, for present, fill'd the soul of man with horrors and fears, with sad and black thoughts and apprehensions of death and Hell. Which may put a man upon Prayers, and Performances, upon doing much in the wayes of God.

Wee read that *Absolom* sent for *Joab* to come to him, but hee came not. Hee sent again, yet hee comes not. At last *Absolom* lets fire upon *Joabs* corn; and then hee came amain, but with no better heart: it is likely more unwillingly than before: so God doth often call upon men in the ministry of the Word; But men will not come. At last God sets fire on the conscience, lets some spark of Hell fall upon them. And then they run to Duties, to Prayers, to do something. Though perhaps as unwillingly as before. All this doth force them, but yet not perswade them willingly to come in.

As the satisfying of conscience troubled, may bee an end of the performance of many duties: so the trouble it self may bee a ground to put them upon performance. As Peace is the end of the Plaister, so the wound is the ground of it. As Peace is the end of undertaking of duties; so the wound is the ground wherefore they are undertaken.

2. Outward Pressures upon the bodies of men may bee another ground to prevail with unsound hearts, to do much in outward service, *Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36.* -- *When the Lord slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and inquired early after God. And they remembred that God was their Rock; and the most High God their Redeemer.* Here was much.

They return to God; That is, in all outward appearance. *They sought him, they inquired early after him.* And the ground of this was Gods hand upon them; *when the Lord slew them*] saith the Text.

And you see what was the frame of their spirit in all. -- Nevertheless they did but flatter him; their hearts were not upright with him: they were unsound.

The like wee read, *Fer. 2. 27.* They gave God their backs, and not their faces; yet in the time of their trouble, then who but God with them. --- *In the time of their trouble, then they cry, arise and save us.*

This was like the *Samaritans* Devotion. *When the Lions slew them, then they inquired after the worship of God, when God sent Lions among them.*

And many there are of their spirit. *Good under the Rod.* Whiles the

the Rod is on their backs, the Book is in their hands; then nothing but read and pray. But no sooner doth God slacken the cords, or take them off the rack, deliver them out of their present distress and trouble, but they return again to folly.

This is just *Mariners Devotion*. Whilst the *Storm* lasts, then they cry and pray; but no sooner is the storm blown over, but they are as vile as ever. They had not so many Prayers before, as Oathes now.

And do wee not see it thus with many? who will not own God in a *Calm*. Then their hearts say -- *depart from us, wee desire not the knowledge of thy wayes*. Yet in a *Storm* they will flye to him -- *thou art our Father, our God*. But this not for *Love*, but for *shelter*.

As many a man may bee glad of a place for shelter in a *Storm*, which they could never brook to live in after the storm is over. So they will own God a *Tower*, a place of shelter in time of trouble; but not an habitation, a place of abode, in times of Peace. Thus you see the third thing. *The grounds, that a corrupt heart may so abound in outward Performance.*

The fourth remains, which is

4. *Where is the fault. Or how comes it to pass*, that a man may do thus much in the wayes of God, and yet bee unsound, yet mis of Heaven. *Where lies the fault?*

I conceive, though the work it self bee faulty: (for how can a good work come from a bad heart?) Yet the great crack lies more in the Work-man, than in the work. Duties are good, Prayer is good, Hearing good. The fault doth mainly lye in the Person that doth these. Their spirits are unsound in these holy wayes.

I will lay down the maim, the fault under these five or six Heads.

1. *Hee fails, or is faulty in the latitude and extent of his Obedience.* His Obedience is a limited and stinted Obedience.

1. Either limited to some commands, which are most sutable to him. Hee doth not apply himself to the Obedience of all the commands of God. There are some duties hee will not do, and some corruptions hee hath no heart to leave.

2. Or secondly, *It is limited to the flesh*, to the outer part of the Command, and doth not extend it self to the Spirit, and extremities of the Command of God.

You must know, there is an *Extra*, and an *Intra*; an *Outside*, and an *Inside* in every Command of God: some part of it binding the *Flesh*, another part injoyning the *Spirit*. Many keep the Letter of the Law, which yet never care for the Spirit of the Law.

Both these you shall see in the *Scribes and Pharisees*:

1. They did something, yea they did much. *They fasted, they prayed, they paid Tithes of all that they had, &c.* But they did not all. There were other Commands, which they gave liberty to themselves in. They could oppress, defraud, bee unjust. And they failed in the

Second too, That their Obedience did not extend it self to the spiritualness of any command. As you see *Christ* chargeth them, *Matth. 5. 21.* They did not *Murder*; they did not commit *Adultery*; but they gave way to *Unjust Anger*, to *Adulterous Thoughts*, *Unclean Glances*, *Contemplative Wickedness*, *Speculative Uncleanness*, &c. And so in all the rest. This is the first main, in his Obedience.

2. Hee is faulty in the *Manner of his Obedience*. Though for the *Matter of his Obedience*, hee do not fail; Hee doth *Pray*, *Hear*, *do Duties* which others do, yet hee is faulty in the *Manner of his Obedience*. Hee doth not *pray in Faith*, *pray with affections*. Hee *confesseth sin*; but a broken spirit doth not run through the *confession of sin*: His heart is never touched with sin. Hee *prayer for Grace*, but his spirit is never touched with the *Beauties of Grace*, nor carried after it with desires for it. Hee looks perhaps to the *Matter*, but neglects the *Manner*. Hee looks after the *Substance*, but neglects the *Circumstances*.

This is the difference between the *gross Hypocrite*, and the *close Hypocrite*.

The *gross Hypocrite* looks after the *Circumstance*, not after the *Substance*. Though indeed they are not such *Circumstances* as these are: they are but *outward*, not *inward*.

The *close Hypocrite*, hee looks after the *Substance*, but neglects the *Circumstances*. Hee *prayer*, but never mindes to *pray in Faith*.

If a man *pray*, and *pray not fervently*; if hee *hear*, and *hear not faithfully*; if hee *obey*, and *obey not willingly*; if hee *begu Mercy*, and *not cheerfully*; if hee *keep the Sabbath*, and *not with delight*; all his services are nothing worth.

3. Hee is faulty in his *Aims and Ends*: His *Ends* are corrupt. His *Aime* is as his *own Ends*, his *own Profit*, *Gain*, *Pride*, *Ostentation*. *Himself is the end of his Obedience*, some way or other.

A man never wrought out of himself, must needs work to himself. And obedience which ariseth from a mans self, is terminated in a mans self again. It must bee a Principle from *Christ*, which carries the soul to *Christ*. A man can go no higher than his Principle. And therefore having Principles no higher than himself, his Obedience must needs bee terminated in himself.

As all *Rivers*, they run to the Sea. They came from the Sea, and therefore return back again to the Sea; so all those duties which arise from a mans self, must needs bee finished in himself.

Such a man, hee is the *God himself* whom hee serves. Hee makes himself the end of all his service: though hee look as far as the end, even to *Heaven* in his service.

Here then is the third thing wherein hee is faulty. Hee makes himself the end of all his Obedience. Hee hath not a single Eye to the *Glory of God*. His service is neither begun in God, nor wrought by God,

God, nor finished to God. Neither begun by his Grace, nor finished to his Glory. A

4. Hee is faulty in this, that hee rests upon what hee doth, and looks no higher. Hee looks upon all hee doth as upon so many bribes for a pardon, as so much good monies laid out for Heaven. Hee weaves a web of Righteousness to cloathe himself withall. Hee never looks out for another Righteousness; to bee justified by; but rests upon that which hee himself hath wrought. Which being not only imperfect, but impure; a rag, and a filthy rag: hee must needs miscarry in it.

If this had been enough to have brought men to Heaven, God might have spared a great deal of labour, Christ a great deal of blood, by giving man ability to do duties; and then all had been done.

But there was an infinite wrath to bee born; an infinite justice to bee satisfied; which none but Christ can do.

And here you see the Scribes and Pharisees failed also. They did much, but they looked out for no other Righteousness than their own; In this they rested for Life and Justification.

5. They make duty it self their Obedience, which should quicken their Obedience. They rest upon the bare performance of the duty, and never look to the end of Duty. So they rest upon the bridge, and never go over.

Duty serves an unsound spirit for Obedience. But Duty doth but quicken, and strengthen, and inable a godly man to Obedience.

6. But the sixth, and the main Crack is here. These spiritual Performances do not arise from spiritual Principles; from an heart principled from above; from an heart universally sanctified. Here is the Ranc of all. Here are new works, but an old heart. New Practises; but a mans old Principles.

You see this, *Isa. 1. 10. to 16.* But I will now instance in the fifteenth only. When you spread forth your hands to Heaven, I will hide my eyes; and when you make many Prayers, when you abound in duty, adding Prayer to Prayer (as the Word is) I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. They were unregenerate; unsanctified. They were new practises, but the old heart still.

The like you see of the Scribes and Pharisees. They fasted, prayed, did much in the wayes of God. But their hearts were not changed, they were unregenerate still; were not principled from above.

This you see plain, *Joh. 3.* where Nicodemus, one of the chief of the Pharisees knew not yet what Regeneration meant. Christ tells him of Regeneration; and hee replies, How is it possible that a man should bee born again, when hee is old? Can hee enter into his Mothers womb again? By which you see, though hee did all those things reported of the Pharisees, as Fasting, Praying, Tithing, &c. yet was hee a stranger to this great work of Regeneration, change of Nature.

Nature, hee knew not what it meant.

So that you see, here is the great fault of all. A man walks in new Practises with an old Heart, an Heart never truly, thoroughly, spiritually changed.

There is a fourfold Change.

1. A change from good to evil. This is a fearful change.

2. A change from evil to good. This is a blessed change.

3. A change from evil to evil, from one to another.

4. A change from some evil, to some good.

I will express it in these four words. There is

1. A Moral Change.

2. A Partial Change.

3. A Formal Change.

4. A Spiritual Change.

1. There is a *meer Moral Change*. When a man changeth from sinfull notorious wayes; to *Morality, Temperance, Justice, Equity, Patience, Contentation*. And sticks there, and goes no further. And here thousands, who lye in the bosome of the Church, stick and perish.

2. There is a *Partial Change*, wherein men leave some particular sins, and practise some particular duties. This is a particular *Conversion*. When men were Drunkards, Swearers, unclean persons, &c. And now are perswaded to leave these particular sins, and betake themselves to some general and common duties of a Christian.

And there are many men, who are mended thus. They will hear a Sermon, and do some outward duties, But they are not new made. And this is but like the putting of a new peece of cloath into an old garment; the rent will bee made worse. Christ sets this down in the parable. The unclean spirit is cast out for a time, but afterward returneth with seven spirits worse than himself, and so his last end proves worse than his beginning, *Mat. 12. 43, &c.*

3. There is a *Formal Change*, when men, in outward appearance do seem to walk in all duties of holiness, and to forbear the commission of any gross sin. And yet never had their hearts wrought upon. All this while it is but their practises, not their Principles that are truly changed. And these are the men that do so much.

Of these St. Paul speaks, *2 Tim. 3. 5. Having a form of godliness, yet denying the Power: From such turn away*. By which phrase, I told you, was implied, that though an Hypocrite hath nothing in him, which is essential to a Christian, as a Christian, yet may hee bee the compleat Resemblance of a Christian, in all those things which are not essential to him. Hee may bee the compleat picture of a godly man, from top, to toe; in every member, every limb, every duty, for the externals of it.

4. There is a *Spiritual Change*, wherein the frame and constitution of the inward man is changed, and all is made new.

1. Not

1. Not new, for substance of soul and body.

2. Not new, for faculties of soul and body.

As new understanding, new will, &c. Here a mans new *Practises* flow from new *Principles*. Here are not only new *Wayes*, but here is a new *Heart*. Hee hath a new *Life* in him, a new *Spirit* in him, by which hee is moved, And the want of this is the great *Crack*, the great *Fault*, the *Ground*, why a man may do much in the wayes of God, and yet miscarry at last.

But there will bee one great *Objection*, which seems to throw down all this. The *Objection* is this.

Object. Nature cannot act, *ultra Spharam*, above it self. Nature cannot go any further than Nature. As wee say of the *Water*. *Quantum descendit, tantum ascendit*. Water can rise no higher than it falls. So may it bee said of Nature: Nature cannot act above Nature: cannot act above her Principle.

But to do these things is above the power of Nature. Therefore, hee who doth these duties, is above a state of Nature.

Answ. For answer of this. Wee say it is true in the Main. A man that hath no more than meer Nature in him, cannot act above meer Nature.

But Nature may bee strengthened from above. There may bee higher Principles set in Nature, which may inable a man to go higher than common Nature, though not yet above one in state of Nature.

A man may bee inabled to act above Nature: yet the Principle is not so high, as to inable a man to act above a man in the State of Nature.

For the better clearing of this. Wee may consider Nature in diverse forms or ranks.

1. There is meer Nature; with those reliques (as some say) But rather (I say) restored Principles, which God gave to man, after hee had lost all; that hee might bee a *Man*, not a *Devil*. For when by sin, wee had lost all, if God had not, out of pittie to mankinde, restored something, wee should have been as bad as Devils in the world; one devoure, murther, commit all outrage upon another. Now in this state, something may bee done, not much.

2. There is nature civilized, and moralized. Nature refined by moral Principles, which whether they bee in nature before, and so but husbanded and improved; or whether they were some common gifts of the Spirit, wee will not now dispute, but conclude this latter.

Now by these a man may bee inabled to do above the common sort of men, hee having higher Principles than meer nature fallen; and therefore is able to do more, in all the works of morality, works of Justice, Righteousness, Charity, &c.

This you see in the Heathens, who far excelled the common sort of men; their Principles being far higher.

3. There

3. *There is Nature sublimated*, and raised yet higher by implantation of higher Principles than these are, by the help of which, a man may be enabled to do above the purest natures of the Heathens; and yet but Nature.

The knowledge of *God*, of *Christ*, of *Sin*, of *Grace*, *Heaven*, *Hell*, together with the implantation of some general Principles, common gifts and graces of the Spirit may so sublimiate a man, that by the help of these, a man may not only be wrought up to do more than meer Nature fallen, but more than Nature strengthened with moral Principles, is able to do.

You see this in *Judas*, *Demas*, *Herod*, &c. whose actions were above meer Nature, as coming from higher Principles; but yet not above men in the state of Nature.

This work upon men, though not so much as *spiritual*, yet it is more than meer *Moral*. Though hee have not so high a Principle as a spiritual man, yet is his Principle higher than a meer moral mans. And by the help of that common Illumination, general workings of the Spirit, broken workings of humiliation, hee may be enabled to pray, hear, read, confer, fast, profess, and what not, for *all outwards*: and yet want the *Sanctifying Spirit of Christ*.

There may be a supernatural work of the Spirit, upon some men, whereby nature may be strengthened from above; and yet they may want the saving work of the Spirit.

You see then distinguished, *Heb. 6. 4.* There were some, who were *inlightened*, and *had tasted of the Heavenly gift*. This was a *Supernatural work*: but yet this was not a *Saving work*, *vers. 9.* --- *I am perswaded better things of you, and such as accompany salvation, though I thus speak.*

Thus you see the Objection cleared. And the fourth thing laid open (*viz.*) *Where the fault is, that a man may do thus much, and yet be unsound.* I adde but thus much to it more.

1. *Hee is a man, who was never humbled for sins.* And this is a *sure Rule.* *The heart never broken, was yet never sound.*

2. *Hee is a man, that was never truly cast out of himself; and therefore can go no higher than himself, in all hee doth.*

3. *Hee is a man, was never fully changed; hee walks in new wayes, with an old heart.*

4. *Hee is a man, who is carried upon holy works with a slavish spirit.* *Hee would sin, but dares not. Hee doth Duty, but hath no minde to do it.*

What the *Apostle* saith of himself -- *the good I would do, I do not; and the evil I would not do, that do I*: Hee, on the contrary, must say, if hee speak truth. -- *The good I would not do, I do, and the evil I would do, that I do not, I dare not.*

Hee is a man, who hath no principle of spiritual life in him; Hee is moved, but doth not move; hee is carried about with weights,

as a Clock or Watch, hee hath no inward Principle of life, to move him.

A Clock you know doth move (or rather is moved) but it is not from any Principle of Life. It is the weights which carry it about. Take off them, and the Clock stands still: so here. They are moved, but not by any Principle of Life within. There are two great weights which carry him about.

1. Fear of Hell.

2. A Hope of Heaven. Which weights if you take off, then hee stands still.

Thus I have at last done with the Doctrinal part: *That it is possible for a man to do much in the wayes of God, and yet have an unsound spirit, and fall short of Heaven, at last.*

I come now to Application.

Use.

If a man may do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven. What then shall become of them, who do nothing? If a man may pray and perish, hear, and go to Hell; do duty, and bee damned; then what shall become of them, who swear, and blaspheme?

I know it is the ordinary vaunt of carnal and unregenerate men, who have no taste nor savour of the things of God. They will say,

I thank God, though I pray not so many Prayers, nor hear so many Sermons, as others do; yet my heart is as sincere as the best of them all.

Alas! poor man! Though it bee possible for a man to do all this, and yet not bee sincere, yet it is impossible a man should bee sincere, if hee do them not. These things may bee done without sincerity; but sincerity cannot bee without these.

Sincerity lies in labouring, not in loitering; in working, not in lazying. Where the heart is sincere, it will put a man upon working, and will make a man to work with all his strength, to abound in the work of the Lords, to eye the Manner, as well as the Matter, the Circumstance, as well as the Substance. It will put a man upon Prayer, and make a man pray fervently, faithfully, humbly. It will put a man upon hearing, &c.

And therefore thou art mistaken. Though a man may do these duties, and not bee sincere; yet thou canst not bee sincere, if thou dost them not. Though hee may do these things and perish, yet thou must pray, hear, do duty: Otherwise thou shalt perish. These things are Necessary.

1. Necessitate Precepti, God hath commanded them.

2. Necessitate Medii, they are the way to life.

You must not look to come to the end, if you do not walk in the way.

Object. But you will say, *This discourageth us. If a man may do thus much, and yet fall short of Heaven, then it is as good to sit still, and do nothing.*

Ans. I must tell you, this is a sign of a *low spirit*, to argue after this manner. Wee should argue thus. -- *Because I may do all this, and yet not bee sincere: Therefore I will labour to bee sincere in the doing of them.* These things must bee done, though all that did them fell short of Heaven. God commands these things to bee done, and his will must stand out against all. If all that hear, read, pray, &c. do fall short of Heaven, yet thou must hear, read, pray, upon account of obedience to God.

The fault, it lies in the *Persons*, not in the *Duties*; in the *Workmen*, not in the *Work*. The fault is not in the *Matter*, but in the *Men*, and the *Manner* of performance. And mans fault must not cause us to neglect our duty.

Wee have an expression, *Micah 1. 7.* -- *Is the Spirit of the Lord streightened? do not my words do good to them, who walk uprightly?* "As if the Prophet had said -- *The fault is not in the Word, but in you, who are the hearers of it. You hear, and hear, and yet get no good by hearing. And will you charge God with that? will you blame the Word? Others get good, and Gods Spirit is not streightened to you more than to others. You would finde good as well as others, if you came with honest hearts.* -- *Do not my words do good to them, who walk uprightly?*

And what wee say of this, wee say of other Ordinances. The fault is not in *Prayer*, nor in *Fasting*: but it is in you. You walk with corrupt hearts in Gods wayes: And therefore you get no good by them.

You have a *bad place*, but full for this purpose, *Hos. 14. verse last*, the last words of the book; hee shuts up the Prophecy with it. -- *Who so is wise shall know these things, for the wayes of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein.* A good heart shall stand, and walk in holy wayes: but a bad heart, a corrupt heart, shall fall and perish in them. An unsound spirit shall fall in the wayes of duty, in the wayes of prayer, in the wayes of profession.

2. Use.

If it bee possible for a man to do much in the wayes of God, and yet bee unsound, yet miss of Heaven: Then this may discover to us the *sandiness and unsafeness of these bottomes, to rest a mans soul upon.*

How many thousands, who have no better evidences for Heaven, than the *bare performance of duties*? They come to Church; they hear the Word; they pray, &c. And therefore they hope all is well.

My

My Brethren, It is true, If the bare performance of duties were sufficient evidences to conclude our good condition: then whosoever did abound most in these things: they had the surest bottomes to rest upon.

But (alas!) You see it is possible, for a man to abound in duty, and yet his heart bee unsound. And therefore the doing of these things will not bee sufficient to evidence to your selves, that your condition is good.

If these Anchors should ever hold, you need not to beat out any better Anchors for your souls. But seeing these do not hold out ever, you had need seek out for better. Else you may miscarry at last.

These may hold in a Calm, when they are put to no stress; but will bee sure to break in a storm. You see the house built upon the Sand, it stood well enough, and the structure was fair, the sandiness of the foundation was not discovered, whiles there was a Calm. But (saith Christ) *When the Rain fell, and the Winds blew, and the Waves did beat, when the Storm arose,* then was the sandiness of the foundation discovered -- *the house fell, for it was built upon the Sand.*

So here. While you have a Calm, while you are in health, enjoy peace, &c. These bottomes seem firm enough; you do not discover the sandiness of these foundations. But a Storm doth arise, when you come upon your sick-beds, when you come to the day of death, then you shall see the unsoundness of your bottomes. All your buildings, your fair structures, all your works and walkings upon this foundation will bee surely blown down; they will never abide the tryal.

And therefore let mee stir you up, you, who are resolved for God; you, who are bound for Heaven, that you would get better evidences, than the bare and naked performance of duties, will afford you. All which may bee done, and thou sink into Hell at the last. Nay, get better evidences than duty it self performed at the best, is able to afford unto you.

1. Because evidences of this kinde are *obscure, full of ambiguity, full of intricate disputes and controversies.* There will bee Objection upon Objection, and controversy upon controversy will arise. And all must bee cleared, and all Objections answered, before ever wee can conclude our estates by them.

I say, Evidences of this kinde, they must bee put in suit, and pass a long scrutiny and tryal, where there must bee Evidences upon Evidences, and no end of them, before ever wee can have any comfort in them.

You will finde, that the clearing of the truth of these Evidences will bee as difficult, if not more, than the compassing of the Evidences themselves.

2. Wee are to seek out for better Evidences than duty performed at the best can afford us, because these kinde of Evidences

are not only obscure, full of ambiguity, and so uncertain: But because these kinde of Evidences, they are *unconstant*, they are *instable*, they may appear to day, and vanish to morrow.

You know, my Brethren, that a man is not *always in the same semper of spirit*: his spirit is subject to *varying and alteration*, in the performance of duties. And therefore though a man may fetch an Evidence out of the Court of duty, at this time, yet it may bee at another time, the Court will not afford it. A man may bee *cleared to day by duty, and condemned to morrow*: This day hee may thence have an evidence, and hee may bee cast in the same Court to morrow. Our comforts fetch hence are lyable to change: They vary, as wee vary, change as wee change.

This is certain, That the Peace which is wrought out of our selves, is again lost by our selves. And the comfort gotten by duty at one time, is lost by duty at another time. Well then, I call you out, to seek out for better evidences, Such as will afford you more fulness of peace, and will minister to you more stability of comfort, than these can do.

Fetch your Evidences from your *Justification, your interest in Christ, in the Covenant*. You will finde an *emptiness in all, only a fulness here*. Draw your waters of comfort from the *highest springs, the springs of Justification*. These are

1. *The clearest.*
2. *The purest.*
3. *The most satisfying.*
4. *The most constant Evidences.*

1. These are the *clearest Evidences*. They are fetched from the *Spring*. Other waters are muddy and disturbed: but *Spring waters are clear*. So Evidences taken from other things often run *muddy*, and are *disturbed*: but those from *Justification* are the *clearest*, and run the *clearest*.

Though these kinde of Evidences are *harder to clear*: It will cost a man something before he reach to these Evidences, before he can make out these Evidences to himself: yet they are the *most perspicuous*, being cleared.

The *Testimony of blood* is the *hardest and darkest Testimony to make out*: but none is *more clear* than that, when once you have made it out to your souls. So that it is worth all your labour and pains you take in the clearing of it.

Other Evidences are *liable to dispute*. But what can Satan dispute against this? Doth hee say, *Thou art a sinner*? Yea, but maist thou say, *God justifies sinners, hee justifies the ungodly*. Though sin hath *weakened the Law*, and made that *unable to do us good*: yet it hath not *weakened Christ*, and *Free Grace*; nor should it *weaken our Faith*, if now wee bee *returning sinners*.

If *Sin it self* were a just *Obstacle*, then there could never bee any, who could bee *Justified*, or fetch comfort from their *Justification*:

tation: because all were sinners. I am a sinner, so was Abraham, the Father of the Faithful: so the best of Gods worthies.

Doth hee say, our sins are great? Yet wee may say, they are not greater than God can pardon. They are not greater than

1. The Mercy of God, to pardon them, or

2. The Righteousness of Christ, to cover them:

1. For the Mercy of God, The Apostle tells us, there was more than enough to pardon him, who was the greatest of sinners, 1 Tim. i. 13, 14, 15, 16. -- The Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant. The word in the Original is ὑπερᾶνδρον. Did superabound, was more than enough; more than might serve the turn for him, who was the greatest of sinners.

2. And for the Righteousness of Christ, it is said to bee an everlasting Righteousness: more than eternity of sinning is able to expend; and draw drye. It is a Righteousness, which as it cannot bee over-clasped by any Faith; So can it not bee posed, non-plust by any sin.

You see, Rom. i. 17. It is a Righteousness revealed from Faith; to Faith. The more Faith, not the lesse, but the more Righteousness is discovered. And as it cannot bee over-clasped by any Faith; so it cannot bee exceeded by any sin.

Thus you see Evidences from our Justification, they are the clearest Evidences; the freest from disputes: and if any Objections do arise, they may bee the more quickly laid.

But now it is not so with other kinde of Evidences. If a man take an Evidence from Duty, there will bee controversies: Objections upon Objection will arise: and there must bee Evidence upon that Evidence, before ever a man can make out the truth of them. Nay, though Evidences bee taken from Graces themselves, yet you will scarce finde a bottome without much search.

Suppose a man come to bring in his Love to Christ for an Evidence; yet this is liable to dispute. You know, there is a False-Love, as well as a True, a counterfeit, as well as a sound. And therefore this must bee examined by the Nature of your Love, the workings of your Love towards Christ, the expressions of your Love in all the wayes of Obedience.

And I must tell you of great latitude and extent in this trial. There will bee long debates, before you come to the utmost. And the like I may say of any Grace besides. Therefore these from Justification are the clearest Evidences from disputes and controversies.

2. These are the purest Evidences. Spring-waters are the purest waters: so these Evidences fetched from the Spring, scil. from your Justification, and interest in Christ, these are the purest. I say, these kinde of Evidences are the purest; and most unmixed Evidences.

You shall see, all other kinde of Evidences, they are not so pure; they have mixtures in them.

1. Are

1. Are they taken from *Prayer*? yea, and *Prayer* at the best: yet these are not pure; they have mixtures in them. Our best *Duties* are mingled with imperfections. They have a tang and taste of the flesh in them.

You know, there is much deadness with our chiefest *Life*, much formality in our best *Power*, much coldness with our heats: much of the flesh in all the employments of the spirits.

2. Or are they taken from *hearing*? and that at the best: your own hearts can tell; There is much mixture in that *Duty*. Oh! what abundance of the *Week* is in the *Sabbath*! how much of the *Shop* in the *Church*? what distractions, in your best attentions? what carnal hearts, in your spiritual employments? what *Pride*? what *Prejudice*? what *Infidelity*? what *Dulness* doth attend all your hearing?

3. Nay yet further. Are your evidences taken from *Graces* themselves: yet these are not pure. There is much mixture in them. Our *Graces* themselves are full of *Imperfections*. You know, there is much blindness with your *Light*, much enmity with your *Love*, much hardness of heart with your mourning for sin, yea, and much mud, much worldly sorrow, in your purest tears, much *Pride* with your *humility*, much murmuring with your *patiences*. As wee might show at large, if need were.

But now these *Evidences* which are taken from our *Justification*, they are pure, without mixture. Though the *Faith* which justifies us is imperfect, yet the *Grace* which justifies us is perfect.

I say, these *Evidences* are pure, without mixture, because they are such, as have nothing of our own in them: had they any thing of ours, they would bee imperfect and impure: but having nothing of ours, but all *Christ*s, they are altogether perfect and pure, *Christ* is all fair, all perfect, all pure.

Our sanctifying *Righteousness* is stained, imperfect, impure; but our justifying *Righteousness* is pure and perfect. If there were any stain or any imperfection in that, it could not justify, it could not save us; wee should bee undone for ever. But that is pure, that is perfect, and wee in it. As the *Apostle* saith, *Col. 2. 10.* -- In him wee are compleat. Compleat in him, though imperfect in our selves.

3. These are the most satisfying *Evidences*. Other *Evidences* admit of much questionings. Though taken from *Duties*, yea *Graces* themselves; yet they admit of long disputes, sharp encounters and assaults. And, when all is done, yet they bring not such fullness of satisfaction to the soul. But now *Evidences* taken from our *Justification*, these are soul-satisfying *Evidences*, because the satisfaction of *Christ* is in them. These *Evidences* are not fetcht from any thing in us, or any thing done by us; but from the satisfaction which *Christ* himself hath wrought for us. And if there bee any dispute against this, then may wee much more dispute against the other.

If *Christ* bee not a compleat Satisfier of Gods Wrath and Justice for our sins, then these Evidences from the Satisfaction of *Christ* would do mee no good. As the Apostle said of the Resurrection of *Christ*, which was the declaration of that full satisfaction *Christ* had wrought. -- If *Christ* bee not risen, then our faith is in vain; our hope in vain: so here: -- If *Christ* have not fully satisfied Gods Justice, if hee hath not paid all the Debt, answered all bills of Inditements against mee, then my Faith is in vain, then these Evidences can do my soul no good. But if *Christ* hath fully satisfied Gods Justice, then am I sure, for this satisfaction is mine.

So that you see, these are such Evidences, as do not only quiet, but satisfie conscience to the full. Such as silence all doubts, answer all scruples and objections, that do arise.

Other Evidences, they are not so full, not so satisfactory. They may afford a man some obvious Refreshment, for a time, to hold up the head from sinking, but they bring not fulness of satisfaction into the soul.

But now this doth, because you see it is taken from such things wherein God himself is satisfied, and therefore no reason but wee should bee satisfied. If the Creditor say enough, shall not the Debtor bee satisfied?

4. These are the most constant Evidences. Floods and Rivers may fail, but Springs are constant. Such Evidences as are taken from any thing within us, or any thing done by us, may (at least, as to evidence) fail us.

But such Evidences as are taken from without us, as, &c.

These are permanent and constant. In the greatest drought here will bee Water enough, Jer. 17. 7, 8. -- Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for hee shall bee as a Tree planted by the Rivers of Waters, and that spreadeth out her roots, and shall not see when heat commeth, but her leaf shall bee green, and shall not be carefull in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Other Evidences are unconstant, they may bee clear to day, and bee clouded to morrow: the heart is not ever in the same frame. But now these are permanent, abiding Evidences: they are as sure as the Oathes, Promise, Covenant of God, though not ever to sense, yet they are ever sure to Faith, though not ever to apprehension, yet ever in truth. Wee may ever conclude them, though wee cannot ever clear them. Conclude them wee may by Faith, though wee cannot clear them to sense.

I might enlarge my self, and go yet further to tell you these are the sweetest, the most refreshing and comforting evidences.

But to conclude this use. If ever you would have strong consolation, if ever you would have a full and settled peace and comfort, then hence draw your Evidences, fetch your Evidences from Justification,

I know

I know, that which keeps you upon the racks of fears, that which continues you in doubts and jealousies, is this. You take your Evidences too low, either from something in you, or something done by you, and so you are forced to answer a multitude of Objections and reasons, before ever you can finde a bottome to rest upon.

That which doth raise up new doubts and objections in your spirits, and which causeth a fresh return of fears upon you, is because you do not take your Evidences high enough.

You take them from Duties, Prayers, Dispositions, present Affections. And so upon every failing you are cast, and all thrown down again, new fears arise, as if you never had any Evidence.

Were an Evidence sealed in the higher Court, what Court shall dispute against it, what can overthrow it?

But now if all this will not perswade you to fetch your Evidences higher, but that you will still lye by these waters for comfort, you will still fetch your Comforts and Evidences from Duties, yet let mee thus far perswade with you, that you would labour to clear the sincerity of your heart in these duties. Otherwise all this something will bee nothing to you; no bottome of Comfort.

They are but uncertain bottomes at the best, but without sincerity to accompany them they will bee no bottomes; an house not built on the Sand, but built in the Air, no foundation.

And this is the next use wee will come unto.

3. Use

If it bee possible for a man to do thus much, and yet bee unsound; Then what care ought there to bee to clear the soundness of our spirits in our performances.

You pray, you hear, you do much; but ask the question to your selves. Is my heart sound in all these performances? is it sound in prayer? in hearing? if not, all this something is nothing.

If you break the string that goes through a set of Beads, they all fall to the ground. Sincerity is the string which goes through all our Prayers, our Duties and Graces; if that bee broken, all is broken.

Sincerity is the Evidence of all our Evidences taken from below.

It is that which makes every duty glorious, every breathing of the spirit sweet, every groan weighty, every drop of tears a pearl, and precious in Gods esteem.

Sincerity is all in all. It is all, in all our Prayers; all, in all our tears; all, in all our services. It is all to God; that which God accounts all. Sincerity is Gospel perfection. And perfection is all.

Let

Let us then examine our hearts, you that abound most in all outward performances, clear the soundness and sincerity of your hearts in them.

1. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in your obedience in general.

2. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in your performances in particular.

Wee shall now insist upon the last first, And that is, *Clear the sincerity of your hearts in your performances in particular.*

Wee will instance in these three especially which wee single out.

First in your Hearing.

Secondly in your Praying.

Thirdly in your Mourning for sin.

1. *Clear the sincerity of your hearts in hearing the Word.*

Wee will give you these characters of a sincere heart in hearing the Word.

1. A sincere heart desires sincere preaching. Such preaching wherein his heart is ripped up; his corruptions discovered; the most quickening and soul-searching ministry; such a ministry as doth most unravel his heart, and rip up his soul.

You see this, *1 Pet. 2. 2. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word,* the preaching of the Word, and the sincere preaching of the Word, not the Word as it is sophisticated, poisoned, adulterated by mans invention. As the Apostles phrase is, but the Word as it comes sincerely from the Fountain.

Such a man hee desires killing, as well as comforting truths, searching, as well as healing truthes; breaking, as well as binding. And indeed; hee desires no comforting, but in killing; no comforting of his soul, but in killing of his sins; no healing, but in searching; no binding, but in breaking.

An unsound heart; if hee desire to hear, yet it should bee such as would preach *placenta*, speak peace, daube with untempered Morter.

And if a Minister do once preach to the quick. If hee once enter upon the discovery of them, their hearts rise against the truth; they rebel against the Word; and such are no Ministers for them. They will finde out one that they can live in sin, and yet live in peace under his Ministry.

We read in the 42. of *Fer.* read it throughout, (the Chapter is worth your taking notice of.) Let mee intreat you to read it when you come home; you shall see there the depth of a self-deceiving spirit.

You shall read there, the Children of *Israel* desired *Feremy* to inquire of the Lord what they should do, and they would assuredly do it; but their hearts deceived them. You see there that they thought *Feremy* would have brought them an answer from

God agreeable to their own spirits.

They did not think that their will must have come up to Gods will, but that Gods will would have come down to their will.

Well, *Jeremy* goes to God, and hee brings them a message from God which was clean crosse to their lusts. And then the venome of their spirits which before lay hid, appeared, they brake out into open rebellion against the Word of the Lord, and spake plain. Wee will not hear the Word of the Lord which thou hast told us.

So it is with many unsound spirits, self-deceiving spirits, before a Minister come into a Parish. Oh then say they! let us have a good Minister, one that may do our souls good, one that may bring a message to us from the Lord, discover to us Gods will. And few there are but do thus far agree; but if once a Minister rip up their sins, search their wounds, that they may bee healed of them: if once hee come to discover their corruptions, and endeavour to take them off their unsound bottomes, whereon if they live and dye, they will perish. Then they flye out against the light, and him that holds it forth to them. Away with such a man from the earth. Wee will not hear the Word of the Lord spoken.

Whereas a sincere heart doth side with the Word, with light, to fight against and destroy his corruptions.

These men they side with their corruptions and lusts, to fight against the truth, to blow out the light, and oppose the preaching of the Word.

A sincere heart doth hold up the Law against his lust. Let my lusts perish, rather than thy Law bee destroyed. But a corrupt heart doth hold up his lust against the Law. And saith in his heart, Let the Law rather than my lust bee destroyed.

There is not one corruption which thou keepest with love and liking, but thou wishest in thy heart, that there were no such Law against it. The Drunkard wisheth there were no such Law against his Drunkenness. The unclean person would bee glad there were no Law against his uncleanness, rather part with so much of Gods Nature, which the Law is a beam of, than part with his lust.

Hence it is truly said, *peccatum est Dei Cidium*, sin is Gods slaughter, because sin strikes against the very being of God; the purity and holiness of God.

Hee that would not bee as God is, would hee glad if God were as hee is. That is a certain rule, that hee that will favour himself in any corruption, would bee glad if God would favour him too. That there were no Law against it, or that there were a Law to countenance it, or no Law to punish it. That God were not against it, that God were of his mind, or that there were no God, or no God to punish it, &c.

2. A sincere

of order. A sincere heart in hearing the Word.

1. Is willing to receive the truth of God.

2. Is willing to receive every truth of God.

3. Is willing to receive it as the truth of God.

1. Hee receives the truth not into his head only, his understanding to know it, but into his heart, his affections to love it.

Hee doth not imprison it in the head, but lets it go down into the heart. And the whole soul is made the residence and place of truth. Lord how I love thy Law. Contrary hereto is that, 2 Thes. 2. 10.

2. Hee is willing to receive every truth. Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth. Hee looks upon every word of God as good, every truth of God, as comming in the image of God, and comming with the authority of God, and there is ready entertainment for all, as well those which make against him, as those which make for him, though a truth appear never so formidable that the receiving may cost a man death.

3. Hee is willing to receive truth, as the truth, that is, in the Power, Majesty and Authority of Truth. And sets it up as King in his spirit. To which hee desires to yeeld subjection and obedience in all.

Hee lets it come in, in its enlightning, in its convincing power, in its humbling and awakening power, as well as in its quickening and comforting power.

Every truth shall bee received as the truth of God.

But now an unsound spirit

Hee is not willing to receive the truth; some truth hee dare not own, least they should disturb him in a way of sin. As the Apostle 2 Per. 3. 15. Of this they are willingly ignorant; they have no desire to know this. They will desire to shut out the light, that their corruptions may not bee disquieted. Mat. 23. 15. They wink with their eyes, that they might not understand.

2. They receive not every Truth. It may bee such as are notional they will, or such as may stand with their lusts and present advantages; not such as are practical, and cross them in their corrupt ends and practises.

They look upon some truths, as an *ignis fatuus*, that if they should entertain them, and follow them, they would lead them into danger.

It was the speech of a King of France, that hee would lanch no further into the deep, than hee might come safely to shore. That is, hee would follow Truth no further, than hee may preserve himself and his own. If those bee hazarded, hee will forsake the Truth.

3. They receive it not as Truth.

1. Not for it self.

2. Not to bee King over them.

3. Not for it self, but for other private and personal respects.

Either for their gain, their advantage, or for fear and danger.

out of respects to the greatness, or quality of the persons, who do entertain a Truth.

Whereas a godly man doth love the person for the Truths sake. As St. *John* writing to the Elect Lady, whom hee said hee loved for the Truths sake, *1 Joh. 1. 2.*

They that love the Truth for the persons sake, may say they love the Truth for the Ladies sake. The one the person for the Truths sake, the other the truth for the persons sake.

So you see they receive it not as Truth for it self.

1. They receive it not as Truth to bee Lord and King over them. To which they yeeld obedience and subjection in all things.

Many men would govern Truth, but they will not suffer Truth to govern them. They would keep Truth, though but in prison, for all their keeping is but imprisoning, but they will not suffer Truth to keep them, though the Truth would make them free. Corrupt spirits they receive Truth as a Servant, not as a King. And before they receive it, they will ask what it can do for them; what service, what advantage can it bring them? If none, Truth shall not bee entertained of them.

3. A sincere heart in hearing the Word, is an honest heart; and there is the summe of all.

This Christ expresseth in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed, *Luk. 8. 15.* the sincere spirit received the Word with an honest and good heart.

Now the honesty of a mans spirit in hearing, or an honest heart in hearing, is such as

1. Hears the Word, as Gods Word, bee the instrument never so weak and despicable, yet it shall prevail with an honest heart, because it is Gods Word. You have an expression in *Isa. 11. 6.* *A little Childe shall lead him.*

Whoever comes with a message from God, whoever brings a word, hee shall prevail and perswade with him.

An honest servant will take notice of his Masters mind, though a Child bee the messenger, hee looks not on the person that brings it, but on the message brought. So though the person bee never so weak, if hee bring a word from God, an honest heart will vail to it.

2. An honest heart sides with the Word of God against himself, hee takes part with a truth against himself.

Whereas an unsound heart sides with his corruption against the Word, fights against that which fights against it, but an honest heart sides with the Word against his corruption.

3. An honest heart desires to profit by the Word, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* *As new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby.* Hee is a man that is resolved to practise whatever God reveals. Hee hath no exceptions or reservations to himself,

self, but is bent to practise every Truth God reveals to him. Hee asketh the way to *Sion* with his face thitherward; as one resolved to go the way that God shall reveal.

This was that which *Paul* said, *Lord, what wilt thou have mee to do?* They were not *verba expostulantis*, but *verba submittentis*. Hee was not only desirous to know, but resolved to do whatever God did reveale to him.

An honest heart desires every Truth to bee made his own. And that there may bee Principles bred in the spirit suitable to the Truthes revealed to him. Hee is desirous that every degree of illumination may bee a further degree of sanctification. That his heart may bee transformed into the nature of truthes revealed.

It doth not content him to have truthes in the head, and a lye in the heart: Truth in the head, and error in the spirit. Light in the head, and darkness in the heart, but hee desires the whole man may bee digested into the nature of truthes: Truth formed in his soul.

4. An honest heart, hee hears the word with reflection. As in reading the word, hee reads himself with it. So in hearing the word, hee doth peruse himself with it. Hee hears with reflection; hee hears with application, charging and clearing his heart, according to the evidence which conscience gives in upon hearing of the Word.

2. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in matters of praying. I told you in the beginning that it was possible for a man to pray, day and make many prayers, to abound in praying, hee may pray in publick, pray in private, pray in the Church, and pray in his closet; hee may multiply to pray, as the word importeth, *Isa. 1. 19*. And yet his heart bee unsound. And therefore, you, who do abound much in prayer, labour to clear the sincerity of your hearts in this duty.

Wee will give you these Characters of an heart sincere in Prayer.

1. Character.

Where the heart is sincere in Prayer, there is a doing of the duty with all our strength.

There will bee a laying out of all the strength and powers within us. The strength of our Judgement, the strength of our will, and our affections, the strength of the whole soul in the work. Prayer when sincere, is a wrestling work. *Jacob wrestled with God*, that is, hee wept and prayed, *Hos. 12. 4*. Prayer is the souls contention, the souls struggling with God.

It is a sweating work. It is the sweat and blood of the soul. A sincere heart layes out its strength in prayer.

Though a mans strength bee but weakness, yet if a mans strength bee in the work, is sufficient to evidence a mans sincerity. Indeed if a man had a Male in his flock, and should offer to the

the Lord a female. If hee had a better, and should give God a worse. If hee had strength, and yet served the Lord with weakness, this would declare the heart to be unsound.

But when a mans strength is in the work, though that strength be but weakness, yet it will evidence the sincerity of the heart. And there is no reason that you should look upon those Prayers as cast, as lost Prayers, where your strength is in them.

When thou hast been with God, and performed a duty, although but weakly, many imperfections in it, much unbelief, much hardness, much deadness, and coldness, yet if your strength have been in the duty, you may rise up without confusion and shame, upon this ground, your strength hath been in it, your heart doth not condemn you, you are able to clear this to your spirit, your strength hath been in the work.

But now such are here condemned; and cast, who have a Male in their flock, and offer to the Lord a Female. God curseth such. *Cursed, &c.* Mal. 1. 14. When you have strength, and serve God with weakness, when you will turn off God with your cold, your lazy, sleepy, and formal devotions, and will not take any pains with your own hearts in these holy works. This discovers your spirits to be unsound, and false to God.

2. Character.

Where the heart is sincere in Prayer, there is no rest or content to the soul, till the heart be wrought into the work.

A sincere heart in Prayer, is an heart-sincerity in Prayer, not a tongue in Prayer, not an head in Prayer, but an heart in Prayer.

Prayer is not lip-work, or head work, but heart work. And where the heart is sincere, hee is not content till the heart be in the work. Hee is not content to be down on his knees, if his heart be not up. To have an hand in the work, if his heart be not also in it.

A sincere heart labours to get his heart into the work. Hee prays in prayer, *Jam. 5. 17.* There is an affective collation with the duty. If hee confesseth sins, hee desireth to get affections suitable to the confession of sin. An heart wounded and broken under the sight and sense of sin.

If hee prays for pardon, hee labours to get an heart apprehensive of the want, and also of the worth of mercy, and seeks a mercy as a condemned man a pardon.

If hee pray for Grace, or the subduing of lusts, still hee labours to get an heart suitable to the things hee wants, and that which hee doth desire.

It was the speech of *Bradford*, that hee would never leave a duty till hee had brought his heart into the frame of the duty. Hee would not leave confession of sin, till his heart was broken for sin. Hee would not leave petitioning for Grace, till his heart was quickened

ened in desire. He would not leave gratulation, till his heart was enlarged with the sense of the mercies he enjoyed, and quickned in the return of praise.

But now an unsound heart, if hee can but pass over a duty. If but say his prayers, though hee have never laboured to get his heart into them, yet he is well enough.

This is to draw neer with our lips, when yet our hearts are far from God. This is to offer God a bulk and carcass of duty, without the life and spirit of duty, and so it is abominable to God.

A body without a soul stinks, so here, your Confessions of sins, are Commissions of sins, Iterations of sins, when your hearts are not sensible and affected with sinnes you confesse. Hee that remembers sinne with delight, doth commit the sinne again.

He that remembers sin without sorrow, doth but revive his former guilt, hee removes it not; A man may displease a man as much with the Confession of a fault, as in the Commission of the fault.

If a man had offended you, and should come in a sleight way to confess his fault, you would be more offended at him for his confession, than for his fault.

So when you shall come before God and confess your sins, without any compunction for your sinnes, without any sense of sin, or sorrow for it, you do aggravate your sins, and increase guilt, instead of removing guilt from your souls.

An hard heart, and a dry eye in the confession of sin, is an aggravation of your sins.

3. Character.

An heart sincere in Prayer, doth thirst after Communion with God in Prayer.

If a duty leaves the soul on this side God, unlesse it have carried the soul over to God, and brought a man to some further Communion with him, with his mercy, his love, his grace, his Spirit, the soul is not content with duty.

Others they make duty the end of duty, prayer the end of prayer, And therefore if they can but rid their hands of a duty, though they had no communion with God in it, yet they are well enough.

But now a sincere heart, hee looks above a duty, hee looks upon duty but as a bridge to convey him over to God, as a means to bring God and his soul into nearer communion, and if yee have not seen God, and found God in a duty, if his spirit hath not conversed with God as a Father, as a friend as a child with his father, as a man with his friend, he hath no content in duty.

Obj. But you will say, how shall a man know when he hath Communion with God in duty?

Ans.

Ans. For the answer of this, I must first tell you, that there is a great mistake among men and women, of a tender spirit about this point, that they think they have no communion with God, unless they have met with God in an heart-cheering, and an heart-comforting way, when God comes in with joy, with comfort, with cheerings and enlargements. Then they are willing to grant you, they have had communion with God.

But if God have come in, in an heart-breaking, humbling, and casting down their souls in the sight and sense of their sinnes, and imperfections, They do not think they have Communion with God.

And therefore I must tell you first in the general. That you may have Communion with God, as well in an heart humbling, as an heart reviving, an heart Comforting way.

In the life to come in heaven, all our Communion with God is with Comfort, with fulness of joy, *At his right hand is fulnesse, &c. Psal. 16. 11.* with thee there is a fountain of joy. Then all tears shall bee wiped away from our eyes.

But in this life on earth, we have mixed communion, and have communion with God, as well in humblings, as in comfortings.

You go upon a duty, and you think to meet God one way, and hee comes in another way.

Sometimes you expect God in a comforting, and God comes in, in a quickning way.

Sometimes thou expects God in an heart breaking way, and God comes in, in a comforting way.

As the wind, sometimes it blows up rain, sometimes it blows away rain.

So the Spirit of God, which bloweth where, and when, and how it listeth, sometimes blows up rain, comes into the soul in an heart humbling and breaking way, And sometimes it blows away rain, and comes into the soul in a cheering, and heart comforting way.

In both these the soul hath communion with God, in joys, and tears, in mournings, as well as comfortings.

And that in the general to answer the mistake of weaker Christians.

Quest. And now to the answer of the question, How a man shall know when he hath had communion with God in a duty?

1. 1 Answer. In general, then thou meetest with God, and hast communion with God in duty, when God hath inabled thee to act grace in a duty.

An unregenerate man may act parts, and gifts in a duty, but he cannot act grace, hee hath none to act.

If then God do inable thee to act grace in a duty, to act thy faith to close with promises, to act thy repentance for sinne, to act love

love to God, All or any of these graces, thy soul hath then communion with God in duty.

2 Again, When the performance of a duty doth lead the soul in better frame, a more humble frame, or in a more watchful frame, when the heart is more quickned, or more broken.

When the heart is farther set against sin, more resolved to walk with God, and obey him, when the frame of a mans spirit is changed, or bettered in any of these ways, it is a sign that thou hast had communion with God in duty, though God hath not come in with fulness of comfort, with chearings or joys.

In this life, most of our communion lyes in quickning grace.

In the life to come, our communion is risen up to full comfort, our life then is all joy.

And so much shall serve for the third Character, and the answer to the Objection.

4. Character.

A heart sincere in Prayer, doth rise up praying from Prayer, hee goes away with the affections of, and affections to prayer, after the Prayer is done.

The Duties of an unsound heart, they come but from a cistern; his devotion is a stinted devotion; When the Prayer is done, his affections are done also, the water is all run out, his affections are then done also, perhaps before.

But the Duties of a godly man, they arise from a spring, a fountain, and his heart is not runne out with his Prayer, hee hath affections of Prayer when the Prayer is done, hee riseth up praying from Prayer. The much hee hath done, is but a little of that which his soul desires to do.

An unsound mans actions are as big as his heart, perhaps larger, but for a sincere spirit, the heart is still bigger then the action, all he doth is but a little of that hee desires to do. I say where there is sincerity, there is a desire of more, all is but a little of that abundance that is in his heart. When hee hath mourned for sinne, hee wisheth still he could mourn more. Hee hath an affection of sorrow within him, larger than any expression of sorrow hee can shew. So you see *David, Rivers of tears runne down mine eyes because men keep not thy law.* Not that *David* had so much moisture within him as to swell a river, poor man! hee had not so much moisture in him; but he had such an affection of sorrow, that if hee had had as many tears as would have swelled a River, made a Sea, they should all have been laid out for sin.

And indeed if a man had wept a sea of tears, and his affections of mourning, did end with his expressions of sorrow, hee had not yet wept at all, nor shed one true tear of godly sorrow for sin.

So again, when hee hath prayed, still his heart is above his action, and hee riseth up praying from prayer, with a praying spirit, affections, when the Prayer is done.

This was that which made Christ commend the poor Widows charity; shee gave but two mites, and yet hee saith, shee had given more than all the rest. Her heart was bigger than her action, her affections, than her expressions of charity. Others they gave, but their purses were larger than their hearts, they emptied their hearts, but not their purses. Shee, her heart was bigger than her purse, shee emptied her purse, but not her heart; thus shee gave more.

So this is the fourth; a sincere heart is larger than his duty, hee riseth up praying from Prayer, all hee doth is but a little of that hee desires to do, but a little of that abundance that is in his heart. Others, their actions are as large, nay larger than their hearts, they have little heart to the duty, and their heart is gone, hath done, before the duty bee done. A wicked man doth sin out of the abundance of his heart; as Christ saith, *out of the abundance of the heart, come, &c.* Mat. 12. 34. Hee is never weary of sinning, hee hath a fountain for that; but though hee sin out of the abundance of his heart, yet hee doth not pray out of the abundance of his heart, his heart is done, before his Prayer is done, if not, they end together. Well, think of it; hee who yet hath not this Principle which I speak of, hath not yet a Gospel Principle, though hee do never so much; hee is not yet under the conditions of Grace and Mercy. These are the lowest terms of the Gospel.

5. Character.

A heart sincere in Prayer doth eye it self in Prayer; it is a heart that diligently observes it self in the duty, views all the workings of the soul, and takes notice of all the imperfections of the spirit in duty. As to gather comfort, and praise God if right, so to bee humbled and afflicted, if amiss.

And indeed our sincerity is as much discovered in lamenting the imperfections of a work, as in the most perfect performance of it. Where then the heart is sincere, the soul takes notice of the imperfections that do accompany it, and when the duty is done, falls a lamenting the imperfections of its Faith, of its sorrows, the deadness of its desires. Ah! it now laments that hee hath beheld so much sin with no more sorrow, looked upon so many abominations with no more mourning. That hee hath had no more Faith to close with the Promises of pardon, of Grace, of purging. That hee hath had so barren, so shallow, so sleight thoughts of Gods love. That hee hath been so cold in his affections again towards God. That he hath had so sleight conceptions of sin, and no more sorrow for it. That his heart hath been no more affected with the mis-

miserics of others, nor no more enlarged to seek God for them. That there hath been so much earth in Heaven, so many carnal thoughts, so much distractions in his spiritual imployment. Ah! my Brethren, a good heart sits down when duty is done, and goes and mourns over all his Prayers, weeps over all his tears, confesseth all his confessions, and prayes over all his Prayers. And hee makes up the want of a duty with sighs, the imperfection of a duty with tears.

Assure you selves, God is as much honoured in your mourning for imperfections of a duty, as hee is by your most perfect performance of it. Blushing in Gods account is perfect beauty. When a soul can blush and bee ashamed for the blemishes which are in its spiritual beauty, God looks upon this soul as beautiful. This is all wee can do, to desire and mourn, to aime at the highest in our desires, and to mourn when wee fall short of what wee desire. A Christian is made up of these two things, desires, and mournings. Desires, Oh that my heart were directed! Oh that I could beleeve more, love more, prize more! Oh that I were more agreeable to Gods Nature and Will, &c. and then comes in mournings, *O miserable man that I am!* &c. Oh that my heart should bee so hard, my spirit so dead, my soul so cold in holy exercises! And here is sincerity, yea and here is the utmost wee can reach, when wee come unto the utmost wee can attain in this life, here wee are but travaillers towards our home, not yet at home, in our way, not come to our rest. And wee may well say it with our fellow travellers, while *Augustine* cries out, *I hate that which I am, and love and desire that which I am not. Oh wretched man that I am!* in whom the Cross of Christ hath not yet eaten out the poisonous and bitter taste of the first tree: Another hee saith, *Lord, I see, and yet am blinde, I will, and yet rebel, I hate, and yet I love, I follow, and yet I fall, I press forward, yet I faint, I wrestle, yet I hate.*

Well then, let us make up the want of our beauty with a blush, the imperfections of our duties with sighs and tears, and then cast them all into the arms of Christ for acceptance.

If you convey a duty to him with tears, hee will present it to his Father with blood, hee will sprinkle it with his own blood, mingle it with his own merits, perfume it with his own odors, as you read, *Revel. 8. 4.* Whatever is offered by the spirit of Christ, shall bee presented with the merits of Christ, and though never so weak, in him it shall finde acceptance; *hee hath made us accepted in the beloved.* Hee hath life enough to mingle with a dead Prayer, hee hath warmth enough to adde to a cold Prayer, hee hath holiness sufficient to adde to a duty full of sin. Though as they come from us, our duties smell rank of the flesh of sin and corruption, yet being mingled with his odours, with his incense, they shall smell sweet in the nostrils of God. This is one part of Christs mediation, to purchase acceptance for per-

Vileiter, non
Comprehensio-
nem.

Oli quod sum,
non sum quod
amo, &c.

performances, which are but mean. If wee and our duties were perfect, wee did not stand in need of a Mediator, Christ would lose one part of his office. And therefore when the duty is done, shew the sincerity of your hearts in mourning for the imperfections, and cast all into the arms of Christ, and live by Faith in confidence of acceptance. *Who hath made us accepted in the beloved, not our persons only, but our Prayers too.*

6. Character.

A heart sincere in Prayer, is a praying heart. That is, a heart carried out with desire of the thing it prays for. Prayer is nothing else but an exposition of the soul, of the soul in paraphrase, the soul expressed, the inside of the soul turned outward.

It is said of *Hanna's Prayer*, 1 Sam. i. 15. that *shee poured forth her soul*, shee expressed what her soul desired, shewed the desires of her soul.

True Prayer is an earnest and enlarged desire for the obtaining and injoying of the things wee pray for.

Object. But you will say then, *all our hearts are sincere, for who do it that doth not desire the things hee prays for?*

Ans. But my Brethren, give mee leave a little, and I shall shew you this is not so strange a thing as you seem to make it. I shall shew you, *that it is possible for a man to pray, and not desire the things hee prays for.* I will evidence this unto you, in these three great Requests. 1. *In the desire of Grace.* 2. *In the desire of Subduing lusts.* 3. *In the desire of Heaven.*

1. *Thou prayest for Grace, but thou dost not desire Grace in the beauty and extent of it.* Thou mayest desire common Graces, as many Parents for their Children: God give them Grace, say they; but by that they mean no more than common graces, that they may bee honest, no Whores, no Theeves, &c. for if once God change them, and work Grace indeed in them, there is none more hatefull to them of all their Children, than such are. I have heard of a desperate wretch, that when hee came to dye, hee gave good portions to all his Children save one, and to him hee would give no more but twelve pence; and being demanded what was the reason, hee made answer hee was a Puritan; I have heard him say, saith this wretch, that hee had a Promise to live on, let us now see whether a Promise will maintain him.

Thus you may desire Grace common, and general grace, as many desire for their Children, but spiritual and saving grace thou canst not desire, thou hast no heart to that.

You shall hear what St. *Augustine* said of himself in his confessions after his conversion. I prayed saith hee in my unregency that God would give mee grace. *Lord, saith hee, give mee chastity*, but saith hee, my heart said, *not yet Lord, not yet.* For I feared lest God would too quickly hear mee, and cure mee of my incon-

incontinency, which I would rather have fulfilled than extinguished.

And by this you may take the measure of your own spirits, try yourselves, read your own hearts, the next time you go to prayer. You Pray for grace, but see if you bee willing to have grace, first in the extent of Grace, all grace, would the covetous man bee liberal? would the Drunkard bee sober? would the unclean person bee chaste? would the Proud man bee humble, the Contentious man bee peaceable? otherwise thou desires not grace in the extent. ^{Grace in the extent.} Would you have grace in the power of grace, to live precisely and exactly before God? What not to yeild to a word, to a thought of sinne? alas! this they account damnable preciseness, this they cannot close withall. Go thy way, Pray as often as thou wilt for grace, assure thy self, thou dost not desire grace in the extent and power of it, if thou favourest any one corruption, if thou wilt not live exactly and precisely in the world. Thou wouldest think it no mercy, if God should grant thee what thou prayest for. Thou prayest for Faith, but wouldest thou have it? no such matter, why faith purifies the heart, faith sanctifies the soul, it will not suffer one corruption, one lust to bee in thy heart, and now dost thou desire faith? no such matter. Assure your selves, if at any time you desire grace, it is not grace, under a right notion of grace. It is not grace in the extent of grace, nor grace in the power of grace.

It is again, not a spiritual, but a naturall desire of grace, thou desires it but in some present distresse, it may be when thou liest on thy death bed, and seest there is no coming to heaven without it. Thou cannot desire it for it self.

Thou prayest for the subduing of thy lusts, and corruptions, but dost thou desire what thou praest for? wouldest thou think it, if God should answer thee, to be a mercy? I am confident, that till thy heart bee changed, thou wouldest think the answer of such a request no mercy; Would the Drunkard think it a mercy to bee rid of his cups? The Covetous man, would hee think it a mercy, to be rid of his Mammon of unrighteousnesse? No, there is no such matter. I dare be bold to say, there is not that lust which a wicked man would think it a mercy to be rid of. Alas! Thou dost not desire to be rid of thy lusts, thou canst not live without them, thou canst not subsist without them, when thou dost pray against them, thou dost but dissemble with God, there is no such matter, thou dost not desire it. If at any time thou dost desire it, it is when thou hast done with it, or it is in a storm only, and then not because thou hatest it, but because thou darest not keep it, as you know the Merchant casts away his goods, not because hee judgeth them evil in themselves, but because if hee keeps them, he cannot preserve a greater good, his life. Hee

doth

Non sub inuol-
tu mali, sed
minoris boni.

doth not part with them out of hatred to them, for he even throws over his heart with them, but because hee sees the keeping of them cannot stand with his present safety; for after *the storm and danger is over, hee would bee glad to get them again*, if he could. There are many who thus part with their sinnes, as the Merchant with his wares, only in a storm, when they lye on their sick beds, or under some wrack of Conscience, for fear of hell, or as *Jacob parted with Benjamin*, because otherwise hee should starve, necessity drove him to it, or as *Phaltiel parted with Michal*, because otherwise hee should loose his head, hee did not part with her out of hatred, but out of fear, the King sent for her, and if hee had detained her, it might have cost him his head, therefore (out of fear) hee parted with her, though hee wept after her.

3 In desire of
heaven.
Extrema Chri-
stianorum de-
siderantur,
quamvis non
sordida.

3 You Pray for heaven, and one would think you did desire this, wee say, the end of a Christian is desirable, though not the beginning, the rest, though not the labour; you see *Balaam hee wished he might dye the death of the righteous*, though he had no heart to live their lives. So that one would think they did desire heaven.

But indeed as long as thy heart is corrupt and unregenerate, thou dost not desire heaven, if thou knowest what heaven is. If a man should ask thee, thou who sayest, thou desirest heaven, what dost thou think heaven is, it would I think, pose thee. But it may bee thou wilt say, thou conceives heaven to bee a place of pleasure and delight, a place free from all miseries and troubles, and the like. For this is the utmost heaven thou canst desire: Thou lookest on it and desires it, as a place of peace and rest, not of grace and holiness. If I should now tell thee, that heaven is to be rid of all thy lusts and corruptions, I beleive heaven would not be so desirable to thee. Thou desirest heaven, but tis under a false notion, a heaven suitable to thy self, and thats the least of heaven. I have told you not long agoe, abstract and take from heaven, what a corrupt heart doth see, and think to bee heaven, and thats heaven indeed to a godly man. To what I have said of another subject, I will now adde this. That didst thou know the company of heaven, the employments of heaven, the enjoynments of heaven, thou canst never desire heaven, thy heart being corrupt.

A place free
from paine not
from sinful e-
vils.

Heaven not
desirable to
corrupt hearts
for its

1 Company.

1 The company of heaven, shall I tell you? there's none of your mind there. And it is no great happines to bee in such a place, where they are all of different minds from you. Two cannot walk together, saith the Prophet (they cannot live together, take delight together) unless they bee agreed. Now there is no agreement between the company of Heaven and thy spirit, as it is corrupt. See what the company of Heaven is, enquire what they are.

First,

First, There is God, and do you think there is any agreement betwixt God and you; why, hee is holy, and thou art unholy, hee is pure, thou art impure, &c. and *without holiness, no man can see God.*

Secondly, There is Christ, there are the glorious Angels, all these are thine enemies, as thou art in a natural condition.

Thirdly, There are the blessed Saints, and those are such as thou hast despised, such as thou hast persecuted here in the World, such as thou couldest never indure upon Earth, but flye from and avoid, is this company desireable in Heaven? no such matter. If they bee now hatefull to thee, while they have something of thy self in them, (they have corruptions in them, as well as thou, though not under the power of them as thou) Oh how hateful would they be, when these corruptions are removed, when they are better, and thou worse! But what's this to torment thee, in comparison of the presence of God in them is but the spark of holiness, in God those eternal fires of holiness, and if the spark bee a torment, what is the fire? As the Prophet speaks, *Who shall dwell with everlasting fires.*

2. Look upon the employments of Heaven, and see if those bee desireable to thee in thy natural estate.

2. Employment;

There is keeping of an eternal Sabbath, there is praising and glorifying God to all eternity, and would not this bee a tedious thing to thee? canst thou indure to praise God for ever, when now a staff of a Psalm is burdensome, to keep an eternal Sabbath, when a duty is tedious to thee?

3. For its enjoyments.

3. Adde to this the enjoyments of Heaven, and here I can name nothing which thou wouldest think it a mercy to enjoy;

Them wee branch into four particulars;

1. God.

1. Shall I say you shall enjoy God there, who though happiness to a gracious heart, yet a torment to a corrupt spirit. I have read of the *Irish* Earth, that no venemous creature can indure to live upon it, that if a man should make a circle of *Irish* Earth, and put a little *English* Earth in the midst of it for a center, if a Toad, or any venemous Creature were upon the *English* Earth, it would dye there, rather than come upon the *Irish* ground. I tell thee, the *Irish* Earth will better brook a Toad, than Heaven a sinner, or a sinner Heaven.

2. Freedom from sin.

2. You shall enjoy freedom from sin, never sin more. Not to sin is here our Law, hereafter it shall bee our Nature. And is this a mercy to bee rid of sin? sin, which is meat and drink now, what, can the Drunkard be willing to be rid of his cups? the unclean person of his *Dablah*? the covetous man of his bags? can hee think an eternall divorce from such things, hee loves to detest, a mercy?

3. You shall enjoy perfection of Grace, to bee swallowed up with holiness.

4. An eternal Sabbath.

And these are things which certainly a corrupt heart doth not desire.

And

And so you see, it is possible for a man to pray for those things which hee hath no desire, were granted.

Therefore the Character is firm, that it is the sign of a sincere heart in prayer, when hee doth truly desire the thing prayed for.

And thus much for the sixth Character.

7. Character.

Oculum ad fi-
dus, manum ad
clavum.

The seventh and last. A sincere heart in Prayer doth not only desire, but truly endeavour the compassing of the thing prayed for; As the wise Mariner, hee hath not only an eye to the Star, but his hand also upon the Helm, or as the Plow-men of Sparta, they had one hand up to Ceres, whom they feigned the Goddesse of Corn, and the other upon the stilts of the Plow; they joyned plowing with praying. So here, a sincere heart, hee doth not only pray, lift up his heart to Heaven, but hee puts also his hand to the work, to compass what hee prays for, doth hee pray for pardon of sin? hee labours to get his Faith more strengthened in assurance of pardon. Desires hee subduing of corruption? hee makes use of Christ, &c. Desires hee grace? hee is carefull in the use of all means, &c. Psal. 5. *I will direct my Prayer, and look up,* *בְּרִיבָהּ נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה* The words are very emphatical, there are two military words used in that place; the first to set or put an Army in array. So hee would order his Prayers, and then hee would look up, and stand sentinel.

Gods power and grace must not exempt us from the use of the means, but make us more diligent in the use of all means to have our desires accomplished.

Exod. 17.

Wee read that *Joshuabs* sword, and *Moses* prayer were to go together; if the sword had gone out without Prayer, if they had fought, and had not prayed, they had not prevailed, for God will not bee neglected; if the Prayer had gone up, and the Sword had not gone out, had they prayed, and not fought, they had not had successe, for God will not bee tempted, but both these went together, and then Gods blessing was on them.

So here, should wee endeavour and not pray, wee can look for no good, wee go out in our own strength, and cannot prevail; and should wee pray, and not endeavour, wee may expect the same successe; God will neither bee tempted nor neglected: But if wee joyn them both together, if the hand back the heart, endeavours second our desires, wee may expect Gods blessing on us.

This is the last Character. A sincere heart is conscionable in the use of all means, for the accomplishing the things prayed for.

3. Part.
Clear sincerity
in matter of
mourning.

There is yet a third Particular, wherein to clear the sincerity of your hearts, and that is in matter of mourning. I told you, that it was possible for a man, not only to pray, but to seem to mourn too, and yet his heart bee unsound. You read of the *Israelites*, they did not only pray, but they joyned fasting to prayer, as you see in the

the next words to my Text, but more plainly, *Zach. 7. 5. When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth Month, did you at all fast to me, saith the Lord.* There was fasting, and mourning joyned to fasting, yet hearts unsound. There is false mournings, as well as true; Crocodile tears, false tears, as well as false prayers. And therefore it behoves us to try the sincerity of our hearts, in mourning for sin.

Wee will lay down these Characters of it.

Characters of
sincere mourning.

1. Character.

A sincere mourning, is a deep mourning, a sad and serious sorrow for sin. Such a sorrow as doth deeply affect the heart, with the thoughts and apprehensions of the burthen and bitterness of sin.

A sincere mourner hath sad and deep apprehensions of the nature, demerit and filthiness of sin, he looks upon sin as an offence against a just, a pure, a holy God, as the breach of a pure, a holy, and an eternal Law, as a wounding and crucifying of Christ, as a grieving and saddening of the spirit of Grace, as a wounding and undoing his own soul for ever.

Which deep and inward thoughts of the nature of sin, work deep, and inward mourning for sin. The heart is wounded, the soul humbled and grieved, his spirit melted and peirced within him for sin, which hee hath committed against God. It is not his tongue only that repents in expressing and confessing, his eyes in weeping, but his heart in deep and inward mournings for sin. Another may make more noise, more cryings, roarings, howlings, but his sorrow is more inward, more secret, more still, and yet more deep. As you know the deepest waters run the stillest, so the deepest sorrow makes least noise. So that is the first, *a sincere mourning, is a deep mourning.*

An Hypocrite, his mournings are but shallow mournings, hee hath but shallow and fleeting thoughts of the nature and demerit of sin, hee may say with *Pharaoh, I have sinned*, or cry out in a strait, *Lord, have mercy upon mee*, or hang down his head like a bulrush for a day, or roar upon the present rack of trouble for a time, but he never hath any deep and serious thoughts of sin, as sin. His prayers are howlings, and his mournings are roarings. Gods people they mourn like Doves, wicked men they bellow like Bulls under the apprehension of sin.

2. Character.

A sincere mourning, is an universal mourning, hee mourns for all sins.

As hee hates all, small and great, so hee mourns for all, yea for such sins is his heart affected, which another mans light doth not discover to be sins. An unsound heart may mourn for some greater sins, such as have made great wounds and gashes in his conscience: but for sins, *quotidiana incursumis*, for

peccata constantia conscientiam.

omissions and common frailties, wandring of thoughts, imperfections in duty, deadness, coldness, unbelief, these gnats can hee swallow, his light doth not discover these to bee sins.

Nay, yet further, A sincere mourning is not only an universal mourning, that hee mourns for all finnes of his own, but hee mourns for other mens finnes as well as his own, he hath a fountain within him, which runnes over to the good of others. Wee have read of some who have mourned for their own finnes, and yet have been unsound. You see *Pharaoh, Ahab, Judas*. But wee never read of any who were grieved with, and have mourned for the finnes of others as well as his own, but their hearts were found. *Lot* his righteous soule was grieved for the finnes of *Sodom*, and yee know his heart was found, hee called *Righteous Lot*. *David* hee mourned for the finnes of others, yea such as were his enemies, as hee saith, *Rivers of tears runne down mine eyes, because mine enemies keep not thy Law*: And you know *David* was sincere, God tells us hee was a man after his own heart, and the heart of *David* was single and sincere with God. The like I might tell you of *Moses*, of *Samuel*, of *Daniel*, *Nebemiah*, and others, hee that mourns only in relation to guilt and hell, that mans Cistern runnes out only for his own house. Hee mourns for sinne no farther than it doth reflect upon himself, and so not for sin as sin, but sin as it is evil to him, as it binds him over to the wrath of God, and eternal damnation.

But hee that mourns for sinne, in its own nature, as an offence to an holy, pure, gracious God, his fountain runs over to the use of others, hee goes and mourns over other mens sins as well as his own. Wee read the *Angels*, they rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner. What is the ground? do they receive any further addition of good thereby? no they are full, but therefore do they rejoyce, because God is further glorified. And if joys were capable of sorrows, heaven of tears, they would upon the same ground mourn for the finnes of mee, because thereby God is dishonoured. And if wee could see God as they do, our hearts would be filled with grief, our eyes with tears, to see, the God so great, so gracious, so holy, to see abused and wronged by wicked men, though wee no way guilty of their sinne. Thus a sincere heart hee mourns for other mens finnes as well as his own, he is grieved when his enemy do break Gods laws, not so much because they hurt or wound him, but because they dishonour God and wound their own souls. It troubles him to see men swear and lye, to joyn hearts & hands together against God, his cause, his Church, his people, his Ministers, not because they hurt him, but strike against God, and so but beat themselves against a rock, and break themselves, do that which will turn to their own shame, and sorrow at the last, which is the best end that can be expected of sin.

3. Character.

3. *Sincere mourning is a mourning for sinne, a sorrow for sin.* Sorrow is like *Mercuries* influence, good if joyned with a good Planet, bad if it bee joyned with a bad Planet. It was good in *Peter*, it was naught in *Judas*, good in *David* naught in *Ahab*: In the one it was worldly, in the other it was a godly sorrow, the one was a sorrow for the evil of punishment, the other for the evil of sinne: The one roared under present lashes, the judgement and punishment of sinne, as *Augustine* saith, *They lament the evil caused, not the evil causing*, the evil of punishment, the present lashes, not the evil of sinne. You shall see the difference of it in *Pharaoh* and *David*. God you see punished *Pharaoh* for sinne, plague upon plague, judgement upon judgement, and hee crys under the lashes, the present judgement. Oh! take away this plague, take away this death also, take away these lice, these Caterpillars, &c. but there was not a word of sin.

Flagella dolent
quare flagelli
latur non do-
lent.

But I have sinned, saith *David*. I beseech thee take away the iniquity of thy servant; One would have thought hee should have prayed to have the plague removed, which was then on the people. But hee saith take away this sinne, not this plague; nay in the 17th verſe. *Continue the plague if thou please, against mee and my fathers house, only pardon mine iniquity.* Why thus? because hee saw sinne a greater evil than the plague, and therefore desires rather to be rid of the sin, than the punishment of it. Here was now a vast difference between the sorrows of the one and the other. Take away this plague, saith *Pharaoh*, but continue the sinne: Take away the sinne, saith *David*, though thou continue the plague. The one hee mourned under the present lashes, the other under sinne. *Sincere mourning is a mourning for sinne*, and not for sinne as clad with wrath, but for sinne abstractly; sinne in its own nature, not for sin in its damning, but for sin in its defiling nature.

4. Character.

4. *Sincere mourning is a proportional mourning, there are three proportions of sin.* First, of the measure. Secondly, of the merit of sin. Where the heart is sincere it is proportionable.

1. To the measure of sin. Great sins must have great sorrows; thou hast abounded in sinning, thou must abound in sorrowing. Thus you see it was with *Manasses*, hee was a great Sinner, and a great sorrower, hee was humbled greatly saith the Text. *Soft Mary Magdalen*, a great sinner, and there is a great sorrower.

Its true, I grant, That Sincerity doth not lie so much in the measure of sin, as the truth of mourning; there may bee godly sorrow in a drop

a drop, in one tear, when there is not godly sorrow in a Sea of Teares: But this I say withall, that sincere hearts doe ever labour to carry a proportion between their finings and their sorrowings, between their repentings and their revoltings, and though a man may bee justified in heaven, without such a measure of sorrow, yet hee will scarce bee justified; or get peace in the court of his own Conscience without it. Thats the first:

Nonnulla sed
affectu.

2 The second Proportion is, *To the merit of Sin*. Sincere mourning is proportionable to the merit of sinne, as the demerit of sin is infinite, so sorrow for it must bee an infinite sorrow, infinite I say, not in the act and expression, yet in the affection of the soul. As it is said of a wicked man, *if hee should live for ever hee would sinne for ever*, in respect of his desire and will to sinne, and therefore because hee sins *in aeterno sui*, hee is punished *in aeterno Dei*.

So I may say of a godly man, if hee should live for ever, hee would sorrow for ever. His sorrow is infinite in desire and affection, though finite in the act and expression of it. And indeed a bounded, a stinted sorrow is no sorrow. Hee whose heart and eyes do dry up together, whose expression in tears and affections of sorrow do end together, though hee had wept a sea of tears, hee hath not yet mourned for sin. As I told you last day, that *a Sincere heart doth rise up, praying from Prayer*, so hee goes away weeping from weeping, with a weeping heart when his eyes are dry. Godly sorrow hath affections of mourning, when the expressions of mourning ceaseth, because every drop of tears doth arise from a sea of tears within. As every act of faith doth arise from a beleiving disposition, a habit of faith within: so every expression of sorrow from an affection of sorrow in the spirit, every drop of tears from a spring and fountain of tears within the soul. Hence wee read, *1 Sam. cap. 7. vers. 6.* where their sorrow is expressed by this phrase, *They drew water as out of a well, as out of a spring, and poured out before the Lord*, Their eyes did not empty so fast as their heart filled. Their eyes could not poure it forth so fast, as their hearts did yeild it up. All their expressions of mourning were less, than their affections of mourning. And shall I now tell you, though your sorrow may bee sincere, and yet not proportionable to the measure of sin, yet your sorrow cannot bee sincere, if not proportionable to the merit of Sin, if it be not infinite sorrow, infinite I say, in the desire and affection, though not in the act and expression.

And alas how few there are Sincere mourners! you that are sturdy Sinners; you dry eyed Sinners, you hard hearted Sinners, when was the time you have thus mourned for sin, wee see your finings every day, but who hears of your repentings? wee hear of your drunkenness, your swearing, your lying, your gaming, your dicing, and revelling, even till the morning watch upon the

the Lords day; but wee hear not of your repentings; In stead of that wee hear of your new sinning; you adde Sin to Sin, not repenting to sinning. As it was said of *Herod*, that hee added this to all his wickedness, that hee shut up *John* in Prison; this was the great aggravation of his sin, this fill'd his measure; hee added this to all. So there are some who will adde this to all their sins, that adde this to all their drunkenness, their swearing, gaming, reveling, to persecute and evilly intreat those who are Gods messengers to them.

Take heed of thus adding drunkennesse to thirst, and malice, and rage to drunkennesse, lest Gods wrath and jealousie smoeke against such excesses, *Deut. 29. 19, 20.*

5 Character.

Sincere mourning is a faithfull mourning.

So much faith, so much sincere mourning, so much godly sorrow; They are like the fountain and the flood, the one arises no higher than the other. In respect of donation, faith and repentance are infused at the same instant of time; though in respect of manifestation, repentance goes before faith. Faith being like the sap, which is hid in the root, more secret in the heart, and repentance like the bud, which is sooner discerned than faith, both to a mans own self and others. Yet in respect of the order of nature, faith doth necessarily goe before repentance. As a legall faith, before a legall sorrow, so an evangelicall faith, before an evangelicall sorrow. No man can truly repent, but hee who hath some hopes of pardon.

Nemo potest agere penitentiam, nisi qui sperat de indulgentia.

Well then, sincere Repentance; is a faithful Repentance, such a Repentance as doth arise from Faith; by which I mean not, a legall Faith, whereby a man beleeveth the threatnings of the Law to bee true, and hee guilty. This is too low. This may breed a vexing, tumultuous, turbulent, slavish sorrow, but not a godly; sweet, evangelical mourning. But I mean here an evangelical Faith, and yet not the Faith of assurance; or the Faith of evidence; this is too high. There may bee godly sorrow, sincere mourning in that soul, which yet for the present wants the evidence and assurance of Gods love in Christ. But such a Faith I mean which is the lowest spring of godly sorrow. Whereby the soul is persuaded

1. Of the all-sufficiency of Gods Mercy; and Christs Merits for the pardoning of sin.

2. Of the freeness and willingness of God to pardon sin.

3. And then throws it self upon the Mercy of God; the grace of Christ, for pardon and forgiveness. Which though it appear to bee small, yet it will cost you something before ever you reach this.

But now the mourning of an Hypocrite doth not arise from Faith;

Faith, but from sense, either from some present sting, or trouble of conscience, or from some outward pressures upon the body. And hence it comes to pass that his sorrow is not a constant sorrow, while the trouble lasts, the weight is upon him, so long hee howles and cryes; but it once the trouble bee blown over, the Sky clears, his mourning is done. As *Job* saith of his praying, will hee pray alwayes? hee will not. So I may say of his mourning, will hee mourn alwayes? hee will not. When conscience wrings him, when the heart is overwhelmed with trouble, then hee falls a howling, and crying, but when the trouble is over, hee wipes his eyes, and mourns no more. But now again, hee, whose sorrow doth arise from Faith, hee doth not only mourn when conscience is troubled, but when conscience is at peace. Nay, when the heart is fullest of peace and joy, the eyes are biggest with tears; when the pearle of joy is in the heart, the dew of tears is in the eyes. I say, when the soul hath most assurance of Gods love, then will Faith produce child-like arguments to raise up the springs of sorrows in us, to open all the fountains of tears in the soul. Oh will the soul say! hath God been so mercifull? and am I so sinfull? Hath hee been so good to mee? and I so evil to him? As the frowns of God do break the heart, so the smiles of God do melt and dissolve it.

6. Character.

A sincere mourning is a filial mourning.

There are the mournings of a son, and the mournings of a slave; the one doth arise from fear, the other from love, love 1. Of God to the soul. 2. Of the soul to God.

1. From the consideration of Gods love to the soul. When the soul sits down, and recounts the immensity, greatness of Gods love to it; when it takes a view of what God might have done with it, and what God hath done with it; how justly hee might have damned the soul, and how mercifully hee hath saved the soul; what cost, what care, what pains, what sweat, what blood hee hath laid out to save us, and how easily hee might have damned us, Oh! this melts and dissolves the soul; the soul even crumbles into dust, and dissolves into water, under the thoughts of it. You see this set down in *Ezek. 36. 31. Then shall you remember your doings.* Then, when? when God shall expresse love, as you see *vers. 25, 26.* why then will the soul say to it self, as *Abraham* to *Hushie*, is this thy kindness to thy friend? art thou so cruel to him, who hath been so kinde to thee? so evil to him, who hath been so good to thee? Oh these thoughts do lay a man in the dust. God hath taken such a way to justifie and save men, that if wee bee but men, it will break our hearts that wee have offended him, Who is it that can read over that place without tears? *Isa. 43. 24, 25.* Thou hast bought mee no sweet Cana with money, neither hast thou filled mee

mee with the fat of thy sacrifices, but thou hast wearied mee with thine iniquities; and hast made mee serve with thy sins, thou hast made my mercy to serve, my patience to serve, with thy finnes, even to look on while thou abusedst mee. And what would a man imagine now would follow after this, Therefore I will plague thee, I will punish thee. But read and wonder, and read; withhold from tears if thou canst, if any spark of ingenuity bee in thee, *I, even I, am he who blottereth out thine iniquities for my own names sake, and will not remember thy sins.* Here was the wonder of mercy.

2. It ariseth from the love of thy soul to God. The love of the person offended doth cause a godly man to mourn, that hee hath offended him. You see David, Psal. 51. *Against thee, against thee, have I sinned;* godly sorrow, sincere mourning is an ingenuous mourning, scarce a thought of Hell and damnation comes into the mind, if they do; alas! these do not trouble him so much as his sin; that hee hath grieved and offended so good a God by Sin. Hence Zachary hath this expression, *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn;* &c. In which there is nothing but pure love; the expression is observable, the Prophet doth not say, they shall mourn as a son for a Father, there may bee self-love in that, a child may see himself undone in the loss of a father; but hee saith, *they shall mourn as a father for a son, in which there is pure love.* But now with Hypocrites, it is neither the consideration of Gods love to them, nor any love or good will which they bear to God, that makes them mourn, but indeed love to themselves, they have sinned and are afraid God will damn them for Sin, therefore it is terror; no principle of love to God, which draws them to mourn for Sin. As they hate Sin only in reference to hell, so they mourn for Sin only in reference to hell.

What St. *Augustine* saith of fear of sin, I may say of sorrow for Sin. *Hee that fears sin for Hell, fears not to sinne, but to burn, but hee hates sinne indeed; who so hates sin as hell in self.* So he who sorrows for Sin for fear of hell and wrath, hee is not sorry for sin, but howles for fear of hell: but he sorrows truly who is more grieved for sinning, than he is afraid of burning.

Qui gehennam meruit,
non peccare meruit, sed ardere.

7. Character.

Sincere mourning is a fruitfull mourning.

There are pænal tears, and fruitfull tears; Worldly sorrow that is pænal sorrow, it is a weeping to weeping, but godly sorrow is a fruitfull sorrow, a weeping to repentance, and amendment, as the Apostle, *Godly sorrow, works repentance, not to bee repented of;* 2 Cor. 7. 10. There is a great deal of difference between the pains of the gout, and of a woman in travel, the one is pain to pain, no fruit of the pain, meer torture, the other is pain to ease, travel to rest; a travel to birth. Other sorrow is a sorrow to sorrow

row

row; this is a sorrow to joy, as Christ expresseth it under the parable of a woman in travell. Sincere mourning is a fruitful mourning, for repentance is like the waters of jealousy, which either rot or make fruitful.

And first *It is a heart humbling sorrow.*

2 *It is a soul fattening sorrow, by the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better.*

3 *It is a grace strengthening, a grace increasing sorrow.* And therefore doth God preserve such springs as these in the hearts of his people, on purpose to water the seed of holinesse, the garden of graces in the hearts of his people. Every grace within us doth look fresh, every disposition within us buds, shoots forth after a shewre of repentant tears, that man who hath such springs as these within him, his graces must needs flourish, they cannot wither nor decay.

Observe it, A mourning Christian is evermore a thriving, a growing Christian.

4 *It is a divorcing sorrow,* it breaks the league and union between heart and Sin. There is a league between the heart and sin, they are as neer together as the skin to the flesh, as the flesh to the bones, the bark to the tree: Godly sorrow doth divorce between a mans heart and sinne, separates between them, it sets the soul at a distance with sin, Unsound hearts may mourne, may lament sin, but leave not Sin, they Sin and Repent, and Repent and Sin, as if their Sinning did but make matter for repenting, &c.

This is like the Drunken mans round, his drink goes out in tears, and then to drink again. *Pharaoh* could say hee had sinned, but hee left not his Sinne, *Saul* could say hee had Sinned too, yet hee retained his sinne, *Judas* said the like, yet if he had lived, he had been the same, if God had not changed his heart. No, if a man should have lain as long in flames as *Cain* hath, and should come out of hell, red hot out of flames, hee would bee the same man still. All the terrors of God, all the horrors in the World, all the flames of hell cannot change the heart. These may dare a man, make a man afraid to sin, but not hate Sin, this must come from a principle of Grace, a Gospel work. The justice of God may terrify the heart, the power of God may awe the heart, but it must be the love and mercy of God, which must thaw the heart, must change the heart. Now godly sorrow doth work a change in the soul, such a man saith with *Job*, *If I have done iniquity I will do it no more*, hee lamenteth sin and leaveth Sin, he confesseth and forsaketh Sin, God forgives, and he also foregoes sin.

Beside these fruits I might name many more, which are the fruits of sincere mourning. It worketh peace, our tears end in joy, it worketh spiritual tranquillity of Conscience, as it worketh a change.

And besides these you have seven special and particular fruits.

let

set down (1 Cor. 7. 31.) of godly sorrow, on which I want time to insist. But now an hypocrites sorrow is a sorrow to sorrow, a pœnal not a fruitful sorrow, hee is never the better for all his howling, his heart never the more humble, his spirit never the more broken, his soul never the more set against Sin. These tears they leave him as they found him, they are not changing and transforming tears, hee is never the more watchful, never the more careful to please God, hee rather grows more secure, takes more heart to sin against God, hee thinks hee hath done penance and satisfied the Law, hee hath discharged the former score by his present roarings, and therefore may beginne a new reckoning, a new score, and sin more freely against God: whereas true mourning makes us watchfull, and so our falls make us secure.

To sum up all in a little.

1 The unsound heart, hee mourns for Sin either as clad with punishment, or as it bringeth the evil of punishment after it, the first you see in *Pharaoh*, the second in *Ahab*. The other laments Sin as Sin, sin abstracted and separated from wrath and punishment.

2 The one howls under the present lashes, the evil of punishment, the other under the evil of sin.

3 Sence doth provoke the one to mourning, faith and love do cause the other to mourn.

4 The ground of the one is self-love, the ground of the other, love to God.

5 The one is slavish, the other childish.

6 The end of the one is peace and joy, of the other, it is discouragement and despair, as in *Cain* and *Judas*, &c.

7 The one breeds a bitterness and turbulency of spirit, the other humility, mildness, self-denial. Thus I have shewed you these three things, and cleared them.

I beleeve there's many of you, who do not pray at all, many who are yet to shed one tear for Sin; Alas! when was the time, thou hast entred thy Chamber, thy closet, and broken thy heart for sin, humbled thy soul for sin? Let mee tell thee thus much, thou hast sinned, this sinne will have sorrow one time or other, if not here in fruitful mourning, hereafter in pœnal mourning, in weeping and gnashing of teeth. If thou wilt not sorrow for a time thou shalt howl for ever; It may bee thou thinks no such matter; conscience is now at peace, it is like a book bound up, if once opened your peace shall end in a storm, your joy in sorrow; happy thou, if God wound thee; that hee may heal thee, break thee, that hee may bind thee, humble thee, that hee may comfort thee. It is better bee broken here, than to go whole to hell; better be wounded here, than to go sound to hell, better to bee a sad Saint, than a merry Devil.

*Ista tranqui-
litas tempestas
erit*

What *David* prayed for his enemies, may wee pray for our best friends. Send them down quick to Hell. Send them down here by humiliation, that they may avoid eternal damnation hereafter.

Wee began with the last first, *viz.* clear your sincerity in your performances in particular, wee named three particulars, in Hearing. Praying. Mourning.

Wee come now to the end, which is the first in order of nature, though wee have made it last in time.

Clear sincerity
in Obedience
in the general.

2. Clear the sincerity of your hearts in Obedience in general. Now to this as to the former. I will give you some Characters of a Sincere Obedience. Sincere Obedience is 1. A faithful. 2. An universal. 3. A fruitful. 4. A filial Obedience. Wee shall only single out some of them, because wee are willing to finish this Doctrin.

Fall.

1. Character.

A sincere Obedience is a full Obedience, an universal Obedience.

It is universal, in respect of the subject, the whole man; it is universal, in respect of the object, the whole Law; it is universal, in respect of durance, the whole life. Hee who obeyes sincerely, obeyes universally; his obedience is not only sutable to the rule, in respect of the nature and quality of it, but it is proportionable also to the rule, in respect of the latitude and extent of his obedience. There is no man that serves God truly, who doth not endeavour to serve God fully. Sincerity turns upon the hinges of universality. It is said of *David*, that hee had respect to all the Commandments of God, and that hee hated every false way. Hee had not obeyed any, if hee had not respected all, nay which is yet more, *1st. 13. 22.* hee fulfilled all the will of God, the words are in the plural number, *πᾶσαι βουλὰς*, all the wills and Commands of God, and of *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, *Luk. 1. 6.* that they walked in all the Commandments of God blameless, hee who obeyes sincerely, endeavours to obey thoroughly. Wee will instance in these branches.

1. In suffering
as doing.

First, Hee will obey God in suffering Commands, as well as doing, in losing, as well as gaining Commands. An unsound spirit may follow God, while hee can follow his own game too, while they can serve God without cost, without pain or losse, &c. such men love cheap obedience. But when Obedience comes to bee chargeable, when his Obedience to God, may cost him his liberty, his riches, his estate, then they retire, while Religion and the World do walk in the same path, there are many who will tread the paths of Religion; but when there comes a turning, that they must shake hands and part, riches one way, Christ another, God one way, the World another, then they will forsake Christ. You see it was so with the young man, hee was willing to follow Christ

Christ so far as hee might bee no loser, so far as to keep his wealth too. But when Christ told him, if hee would follow him, hee must sell all, when it comes to this, that either hee must part with his Riches or with Christ, then hee falls off, and went away sorrowing. But hee who obeyes sincerely serves God for himself, such a man will obey God, though to the hazard and loss of all, hee will obey God in costly, as well as cheap, losing, as well as gaining duties. Such a man prizeth more of one act of Obedience, than hee doth of all his injoyments, and will take up naked Obedience, though with the loss of all. As hee will not commit a sin, though hee might gain the World for it, so hee will not neglect a duty, though hee lose a World for it. You see this in the three Children, in *Daniel*, and in *Queen Marias* dayes, those go in Sheep-skins, who might have gone in Silks, &c.

Secondly, *Hee will obey God in relative Commands, as well as absolute.*

Sincerity doth not only lye in absolute Commands towards God, but in relative Commands one towards another. And where the heart is sincere, hee will not only hear, and pray, and obey God, but hee will walk in all duties of Righteousness, and charity towards his Brother. Hee is such a one as makes conscience of every Command, great or small. Every one comes from the same authority, *James 2. 11.* For hee that saith the one, saith also the other. And whatever hath the stamp of God, the authority of Heaven upon it, though it seem never so small, hee dare not disobey it; where there is a beam of Gods Majesty sitting upon the face of a command, hee will submit to it. Men you know will not refuse the Kings Coin, though the peece bee never so small; if the Kings impression bee on a penny, it calls for acceptance, as well as a piece; so if the authority of God bee stamped upon the least command, a sincere heart will yeeld subjection to it, as well as the greatest, *Mat. 5. 19.* *Hee who breaketh the least of these Commands, shall bee the least, &c.* Hee who stands with God for small things, when hee will not forbear an Oath, a cup, a ragge for Christ, how should you yeeld to the greater. A man may do the smaller, and yet neglect the greater, As the Pharisees, who tithed Mint and Cummin, but the great things of the Law, the love of God, fear of God, these are not regarded. But hee who doth the greater, will not neglect the smaller.

Thirdly, *Hee will obey God in affirmative Commands, as well as negative Commands.*

Hee doth not only look upon what God would not have him do, but hee examines what God would have him do. *Dives* was cast into Hell, not for oppressing *Lazarus*, but for not shewing mercy upon *Lazarus*, not because hee took any thing from, but because hee gave nothing to him. There is many a mans Religion lies meerly upon negatives. Hee is no swearer, no drunkard, no

unclean person, as the Pharisee, hee oppresseth no man, defrauds no man. But if you ask him for the affirmative commands, there hee is nothing; art thou holy? art thou humble? art thou a beleever? art thou a sanctifier of Gods day? lovest thou God? fearest thou God? Alas! these sins, because they are *minoris infamia*, not so scandalous as the other are, therefore hee makes them *nullius in culpa*, no sins at all, these gnats hee can swallow, without any straining at them, &c.

4. *Hee will obey God in the Spirit of the Command, as well as in the letter of the Command.*

There is an *intra* and an *extra* in every Command of God. One part of the Law binding the flesh, the other part enjoining the spirit. You see how Christ sets it down, *Matth. 5. 21. Thou shalt do no Murder*, there's the letter of the Command. *Thou shalt not bee angry with thy Brother without a cause*, there is the Spirit of the Command. *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, there is the letter of the Command. *Thou shalt not look on a woman to lust after her*, there is the Spirit of the Command. An unsound spirit looks no further than the bare letter of the Command, that part which bindes the flesh or outward man only, and if hee do but observe that in the gross, hee thinks hee hath done well; but now a sincere heart, hee lookst o the spirit of the Command, and if hee do not observe that, hee hath no peace; if you keep the whole Law in the letter, and give way to your selves to fail in any, and do not sincerely endeavour to obey all according to the spirit, your spirits are unsound. Hee that will see God with comfort, must not only obey the letter of the Command, but must bring his heart to the sincere Obedience of the spirit of the Command.

5. *Hee will not only obey God only in the Matter, but in the Manner, not only in the substance, but in the circumstance of the Command.*

Hee is not only conscionable to obey God in what hee commands, but his heart is wrought to a conscionableness in the Obedience. An unsound heart looks no further than the substance of the Command, if hee have but prayed, if been at Church, hee thinks all is well, hee looks no further. But now a sound spirit, hee looks to the circumstance, as well as the substance, the manner, as well as the matter of the command. When hee hears, hee will labour to pray fervently, faithfully. When hee hears, hee will hear humbly, fruitfully, when hee obeyes, hee desires to obey willingly, chearfully, &c. Wee say, *bonum est ex integrâ causâ*, but *malum ex quolibet defectu*, Take any action, if either the Principle whence it doth arise bee not good, that the action arise from corrupt Principles, self-love, carnal fears; or if the purposes bee not good, that the aims and ends bee carnal, or if the circumstances bee not good, it spoils the action. If wee pray, and pray not fervently, if wee hear, and hear not fruitfully, if wee obey, and obey not willingly, if wee shew mercy, and do it not chearfully, if you

you sanctifie the Sabbath, and not with delight, all is worth nothing.

There are some circumstances accessory, some necessary, some wherein the being, and some wherein but the well-being of a duty doth consist. And if you abstract these from them, the duty it is worth nothing. Take away fervency, and humility from Prayer, take away faithfulness and fruitfulness from hearing, take away willingness and delight from Obedience, all is nothing worth. So much for the first Character of sincere Obedience. Universality.

2. Character.

Sincere Obedience is such an Obedience, which doth 1. Come from a right spring. 2. Is wrought by a right Rule. 3. In a right manner. 4. To a right end. I put all together; that I may not multiply too much.

1. *Sincere Obedience ariseth from a right Spring, a sound Obedience ariseth from sound Principles.* A soul renewed, a soul universally sanctified, and principled from above. Such as the Principle is, such is a mans Obedience, dead Principles, and but dead Obedience, unsound Principles, and unsound Obedience. A mans actions can go no higher than his Principles. There must bee a good tree, before good fruit, the person must bee good, before the actions can bee good; if there bee a crack in the person, all is naught. Now this sincere Principle which is the spirit of all our Obedience; it is nothing else but an entire and spiritual frame of Grace and Holiness set up in the soul, whereby a man is renewed and changed. Which is called in Scripture, a new Creation, a writing of the Law in the heart, Regeneration, Renovation, Resurrection from death to life, and a forming Christ in the soul. As it hath a respect to the heart, the seat of these Principles, it borrows five names.

It is called 1. A sound heart, in opposition to an unsound, a false spirit. 2. A perfect heart, in opposition to an Hypocritical spirit. 3. And a single heart, in opposition to a doubleness of spirit. 4. An honest heart, in opposition to a deceitful heart. 5. A whole heart, in opposition to a half, a divided spirit which God hates. And where Obedience is sincere, it ariseth from such a spirit. A sound, perfect, &c. spirit.

2. *As it comes from a right rise, so hee walks by a right Rule in his Obedience,* and that's the whole will of God revealed in his Word; if God saith, do, hee doth; if God saith, do not, hee will not do. If hee have no command from Heaven, hee stands still like a ship becalmed, and wanting a wind, hee will not stir.

Those things which are motives to others move not him. But when a command comes, his sails are filled, he is carried on with strength in obedience to it. Col. 4. 12. Wee have the same

Rightness of

1. Spring.

metaphor; Bee filled with all the will of the Lord, let the will of God, his command, bee the only motive, that carries you on in the service of God. Thus you see it was with *David*, he had respect to the Commandements, he had not respect to the world, to men, to his own ends, advantages, which are the spring of others obedience, but hee hath respect to the Command, he eyes that, hee will obey if there be a Command.

A Sincere heart doth not only do things good in themselves, and such as God hath commanded, but hee doth them because God hath Commanded them; Gods precepts are the ground of his practise, Psal. 119. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy Precepts. Oh that my ways were directed, &c.*

3 He obeys after a right manner, &c.

4 He levels his actions to right ends.

As nothing below God is the spring of his obedience, so nothing below God is the end of his obedience. Gods grace is the spring, Gods glory is the end of all his obedience. An unsound heart hath base and unsound ends, credit, repute, profit, esteem or the like. Hee now makes not the world his end, no not the world to come; the salvation of his soul, the end of all his obedience. Indeed this is a secondary, a subservient, a subordinate end, but not the ultimate end, the primary, the universal end; Gods glory is the Sea, to which all his actions like so many rivers move and bend. It is true I grant, that other ends may creep into the performance of good actions, and that not only lower, but baser ends than this.

But wee are to distinguish between a mans settled, and his suggested end, a mans settled end may bee one thing, yet his suggested end bee contrary, God reckons according to the settled end, the universal purpose and frame of his spirit, and not according to suggested ends. It is in this case as it may bee with a man that shoots at a mark, hee aims aright at the mark, but there may come a jog upon the elbow, which may carry the arrow another way, than hee intended. Or as it is with a man that sets out to go to such a haven, he sets out aright, and steers aright by his compasse, but the winds blow contrary and carry him whether hee would not. But then as the Apostle, *If I do the thing I would not, it is no more I, but sinne.* It was *Bernards* case, hee had set upon a good work, and levels his action to the glory of God, that was his aim, his end, but there were other ends suggested, pride, ostentation, vain-glory, which hee observing, encounters them in this manner, *Abi hinc, &c.* get hence, avoid, you were not the ground of my beginning this work, nor will I for you conclude this work. And it would bee our wisdome, when a man hath set his heart aright in the beginning, when hee hath set out aright, if any other ends bee suggested, to reject them in the like manner, being neither the spring of the action, nor the end of the action. Obj.

Abi hinc, nec
propter te in-
cepi, nec prop-
ter te desinam.

Obj. But you will say further, Is it requisite for the clearing of the sincerity of our hearts, that wee have a continuall eye to the glory of God in every action wee do? Is there required such an actual intention of the spirit in every particular action, &c. that he should aim at Gods glory?

Ans. For the Answer of this, I must lay down this distinction.

There is first an actual.

Secondly, An habitual aime and intention.

For the first of these, An actual intention of the spirit in every particular action that a man doth to the glory of God. It is utterly impossible in the state and condition of this life, it is possible for Angels and glorified Saints to do it, for they are in Gods vision, and it is all their work in heaven, but it is impossible for us to do it here below, no it was not possible for Adam in his innocency to do it.

But now secondly, There is an habitual inclination in us in every action we do, to aim at Gods glory, though there be not the actual intention of the spirit in every action we do. It is with us as with a man travelling towards a town, hee thinks in the morning to go to such a town, such a place hee aims to bee at, at night, and therefore sets out towards it, and though hee doth not think of this every step hee takes, yet its his purpose in his journey to rest there at night. Or as it is with a man who comes to Church, his end is to hear the word of God, yet in every word he hears spoken, he hath not the thought of his end upon his spirit, but he is there by vertue of his first intention. So here though in every particular, there bee not an intention of spirit to level this or that to this end, yet it is the drift and habitual scope of the spirit, that Gods glory may bee the end of his actions.

Nay, Thirdly, Though wee are not able to do it in the actual intention, yet it must bee our care to renew our habitual intention, and as farre as wee can, to draw up these habitual purposes, into actual levellings of these and these particular actions to the glory of God. There are some go further in this than others.

Assure your selves, the nearer you come to an actual intention of spirit for Gods glory in particular acts, the nearer you are the life of heaven. How ever let us so renew our first thoughts, habitual intentions, as that wee may thereby keep in the right path, the right way, till wee come to our journies end at night. So much intention a Travailer holds up as to keep him in the right way, to keep him from going into by paths, although not so much as shall make him in every step hee takes to think of his first intention, the end of his journey. So much for the second Character.

3. Character.

3. *Sincere obedience is a fruitfull obedience.*

It is a growing obedience, hee contents not himself with the measures hee hath, but labours after perfection, *Phil. 3. vers. 12. to the 15. I have not yet attained, nor am already perfect, &c.* A sincere heart hee aims at the top of all, hee looks at the work it self, hee propounds not to himself a shorter end than God would have him reach unto, Gods end is his, and that's perfection, hee desires conformity to the pattern in the mount, to bee holy as God is holy, perfect as &c. An unsound heart hee bounds and stints himself, at these and these measures, and desires to go no further; fulnesse of holinesse and perfection of grace, is not his aim nor desire. Hee may desire so much, as may serve his own turns, and ends, no more; so much as may serve his own advantages, hee desires; but cares for no more than hee can make use of in the way. As the Physician who doth not desire excellency in the Science, yet he will take in so much skill, as may serve his turn and practice; but hee cares not for more. The like I might say of any other Artist, whose spirit is not taken with the beauty of the things themselves, yet he desires so much as may serve ends.

Even so an unsound spirit; whose heart is nothing taken with the beauties of holinesse, yet hee may desire so much as may serve his turns, his secular advantages, but hee will have no more. A Trades-man will take in somewhat, it may bee hee will not swear bloody oathes in the face of his customers, this were to drive men away, this could not stand with his ends; if hee were such a one, men would avoid him; and therefore hee will take in so much as will serve his trade, and no more: these men desire the Talent, not for the masters use, but for their own use. So in any other. But now it is otherwise with a sincere heart, his desire is to abound in holiness, he sees so much beauty in God, that he cannot be at rest till hee bee swallowed up with God, made all like him, hee sees so much excellency in Grace, that nothing but perfection will satisfy him. Nay, and he doth not only make perfection his utmost end, but hee labours after perfection with his utmost strength and endeavours. And the ground of all this, is, because a sincere heart looks singly to God, and therefore serves him with all his might; while a mans heart is divided, his strength is also divided. That mans strength is not whole for God whose heart is not so, But when God is made the one of a mans desires, the one of a mans affections, the one of a mans life and comfort, then will hee bee the one of a mans endeavours too, and a man desires to serve God with all his might. Such men, again, give up themselves to the service of God. Lord I am thine, saith David, and therefore will do his work with all their

their strength. As there are none more strong in the Devils work, than such as have sold themselves to it; as it was said of *Ahab*, hee sold himself, hee gave over his whole heart to sin: so there is none more industrious in Gods work, than such as give themselves up to God; such as pass over themselves by deed of gift to him. When a man can once say truly with them in *Isa. 44. 5.* One shall say, *I am the Lords, &c.* Then is his whole might laid out in the service of God. Thus a sincere Obedience is a fruitful Obedience, an abounding Obedience, as God doth not stint his mercy to him, so hee doth not his service to God. If indeed mercy had been bounded to us, wee had been undone, if hee had said, I will pardon some sins, but not all; or if hee had said, I will pardon all, I will justifie, but not sanctifie; or if hee had said, I will do this, &c. but not, &c. Well, there is the third Character.

4. Character.

A sincere Obedience is a filial Obedience, it is the Obedience of a son; not of a slave, it is voluntary, evangelical, free, willing Obedience; not a legal, servile, and forced Obedience.

It is set down as the Character in *Psal. 110. 3.* Thy people are a willing people, devoted to his laws and service; they are willing to hear, *Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth;* they are willing to do; *Lord, what wilt thou have mee to do?* Hence those breathings and aspirations of soul. *Oh! that my wayes, &c.* There is no task too hard, no imploiment too great; They are willing to suffer too, to go through good reports, and bad reports; through a Sea, and through a Wilderness; through the hottest services, and strongest oppositions for Christ; it is a chearful Obedience, hee delights in the Law of God. As it was said of Christ, so it may bee said of him in some measure. *It was meat and drink to him to do his Fathers will;* duties they are medicines to unsound spirits, but meat to him. Hence *David* sets down this for a Character of a godly man, *Psal. 117. 2.* His delight is in the Law of God; and *Paul* speaks of himself, that his delight was in the Law of God, as concerning the inner man. And *David* hath it up and down, *Psal. 119.* Lord, how I love thy Law! echo like, in *Psal. 40. 8.* I delight to do thy will, thy Law is in my heart. There was a Principle within him agreeable to the Preecept without him. As the eye delights in seeing; the ear in hearing; so the heart in obeying. Actions of nature, you know they are actions of delight. So of the new nature. But this must bee understood, when the Principle within, which should yeeld Obedience, is not disturbed, for as it is in nature, though it bee a natural act, and full of delight for the eye to see; yet if the eye bee offended or hurt, it will breed a tediousness in the eye to do its natural act, and therein which formerly it did take so much delight. So here, though to obey and walk in Gods wayes, bee the most satiable to the new nature, yet if the spiritual Principles

within bee wounded and hurt, it may breed some kinde of wearisomeness and unwillingness in the soul to obey for the time, which may befall the dearest of Gods Children in diverse cases, in these 7.

1. They may bee damped with carnal affections.
2. They may bee tyred with the difficulty of the work.
3. They may bee pulled back with the prevails of corruption.
4. They may drive heavily under some vexing and lasting temptation.

5. In case of the spirits withdrawment of himself, which is either probational or penal.

6. Or in the case of neglects of duty and communion with God.

7. In case of some dangerous relapse into former sins.

Any of which, may breed a kinde of weariness and unwillingness upon the soul; yet at that time there is some willingness of the spirit, when there is a reluctance of the flesh. And the soul will do its former works, though not with so much chearfulness as formerly, yet with as much Obedience, and serves God when hee hides himself.

And thus much shall now serve for this use of Tryal.

Wee will adde another use, and conclude.

Use of Exhortation. Which hath four Branches.

1. Branch.

1. *Get a sincere heart.*

Otherwise all you do is worth nothing: I speak unto you, who do abound most in duties, in performances, you, who pray, who hear. Oh! *do you labour to get a sincere heart in the midst of your performances?* When you do any publick work, look to your hearts, beware of base ends, base aims, lest they creep in, and poison all your works. Beware of a double eye, an eye towards God, and an eye toward your selves, when in opposition. Let it bee said of all you, who put your hand to any publick works in these publick times, as it was said of a Royal Commander, that in all his actions hee placed ostentation behinde, and conscience before him, and sought not the reward of a good deed from fame, but thought the deed it self done a sufficient reward. Oh so do you! And when you have to do with more private duties, look to your hearts, let your tongue and heart answer one another, beware lest your heart give your tongue the lye, in speaking that your heart doth not desire. I have shewed, this may bee done. Do you go labour, that your heart may go with your tongue, your affections may go hand in hand with all your expressions? Nay, rather let your expressions bee but as so many breathings from the like affections within, so many streams issuing from a fountain and spring of affections within. My Brethren, this is the great thing I would press upon you. The power of his Word, and light of his Truth hath brought you I suppose to a form. I hope few are among you, but

but will seem to carry the outward face of Religion. Few but will pray, will hear, will do duty. Many favour Religion, who have no favour of it. It is my desire to exhort you who do much, that you would not lose what you do, do much, and yet perish at last. I tell thee, if thou couldest heap up mountains of prayers, if weep a Sea of tears, if thou couldest macerate thy self with fasting, and humbling thy self, as many thousand years as the World hath stood minutes, from the Creation, yet without sincerity, all this is nothing. What the Apostle saith of charity, I may say of sincerity, *if I speak with the tongues, &c.* Wee read there shall many come to Christ at the last day, and say, *have not wee preached? have not wee prayed, and prophesied? fasted? &c?* They thought they had great wrong done them, why should not Christ save them as well as any others? why not accept of their works as well as of others? and meaner than these too. Why here was the ground and reason, there was a want of sincerity, they had but served themselves in serving him, and therefore hee doth not own them. Oh! then let mee exhort you all, who are much in duties, labour to get sincerity to accompany all. You hear, you pray, &c. get sincere hearts in hearing, in praying, &c. The rather,

1. Motive.

1. *Because sincerity sets a value and price upon the meanest work, it makes the meanest action acceptable unto God.* Wee read, *Cant. 5. 1.* Christ is said to drink of the Milk as well as the Wine, to eat of the Honey, &c. That is, to accept of the meanest work and performance, when there is sincerity to accompany it, *Milk, &c.* A sigh, a groan, a tear, a breathing of the spirit shall finde acceptance where the heart is upright, which I told you cannot bee, if there bee the love and liking of the least sin. God delights more in the imperfect breathings of a sincere heart, when there is not strength to bring forth an expression, than hee doth in all the flourishes and glorious expressions of an unsound heart. Sincerity makes the meanest works mighty with God; it puts weight and value to all. A work doth not make up the want of sincerity, but sincerity vwill make up the want in a work, as in *Asah, 1 King. 15. 14.* hee vwill ovvn the vveakest duty, if sincerity bee in it, Hee vwill not refuse our vworks, as vvee do gold, not because it vvants goodness, but greatness; hee vwill not reject them for vvant of grains, if the gold bee good. Hee hath a merciful allowance for such vworks, vvhere the heart is sincere in the doing of them, though the things done bee attended vvith many imperfections. And that's the first Motive.

2. Motive.

2. *Because sincerity distinguisheth all our works from the works of others.* The day is comming, vvhen the persons and vworks of men shall bee distinguished one from another. And as you vvould

have your persons distinguished from others at the great day, when Christ shall come to separate the precious and the vile, the Sheep from the Goats, the good from the bad: you would then be glad to have your works distinguished, when all the works of men are to be tryed and burned with fire, to see whether they will indure tryal, yea or no; you would be glad then to have something in your works, to distinguish them from others that are to perish. Why then, if ever you would have that, labour now to get Sincerity. Sincerity will do this, it will set such a stamp, such a Character upon them, as no false coin, no work of any Hypocrite can have, and therefore labour for it.

3. Motive.

3. *Because otherwise all thy prayers, thy tears, thy duties, all is lost, and that is a sad case.* If a man had laid out much pains and cost about a work, hee would be sorry to lose all hee had done for want of a little more. You have done much, it may be, suffered much in the wayes of God, would you not now lose all your former labours, all your prayers, all your tears, your many sad hours spent in the wayes of godlinesse, would you not lose all in conclusion? Oh! labour to get a sincere heart: if not, you will assuredly lose the things you have wrought, God will never own them. Though the things be materially good in themselves, as what better than praying, hearing? &c. yet if the heart be not sincere in them, God will never own them. You see it in the first of *Isaiah*: the works were good, and such as God had commanded, such as his soul delighted in, yet wanting this sincerity, all was nothing, &c.

4. Motive.

4. *Because sincerity is the chiefest thing God eyes in men, the main thing which God now desires under the Gospel.* God looks not for a legal perfection from you, in respect of legal, actual, universal, personal Obedience, hee desires sincerity, and that under the Gospel, is perfection.

5. Motive.

5. *Sincerity will afford us comfort in the saddest times, of our soul or body, in our spiritual and temporal sorrows, &c. when other things cannot minister comfort, when duties and prayers must stand afar off, and are not able to reach forth any comfort to us, yet sincerity can.* In the greatest darknesse of the soul, when the soul is compassed with thick darknesse, sincerity will open a Casement, and thereby let light into the soul, *Psal. 112. 4. Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness,* in the darkest, whereas Hypocrisy is like painted windows, keeps out light, Sincerity will be like windows of Glass, transparent, let in light.

6 Motive.

6 Motive.

6 Sincerity doth fence the heart against apostacy, Partial and Total.

Wee will now come to the means to get a sincere heart, Cure Hypocry-
in which I shall endeavour to apply my self to the cure of an ^{fy.} hypocrite. Which is

But before I come to lay down the means of cure, I must tell you this,

1 It is a difficult cure.

2 A painful cure.

1 A difficult cure. It is one of the hardest cures are wrought 1 Hard to cure.
upon the souls of men. A cure seldome wrought. Wee have heard of a bloody and Idolatrous *Manasses*, an unclean *Mary*, an oppressing Publican, a persecuting *Paul*, and many other fearful, and great, open, and notorious sinners wrought upon, brought to life. But where have we read of the return of a *Judas*, of a *Simon Magus*? where do wee read of one example of such as have been grosse hypocrites, who have afterward been savingly wrought upon?

I confesse it is all one with God, to do the one, as the other, it is as easy with him to change the heart of an hypocrite, as any other, for infinite power and grace knows no difference, but it is a thing not so usually done, And though as easy in respect of God, yet more difficult *quoad nos*. And so I would have you understand me, that the difficulty is in respect of us.

1 It is hard to convince such a man that hee needs a cure, you 1 Hard to
see it in *Rev.* 3. vers. 16, 17. God tells them they were lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, there was their distemper, and yet you see what thoughts they had of themselves, in the 17. vers. *Thou sayest, thou art rich, and increased in goods, and hast need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* So you see it is hard to convince such a man. Another man is easily convinced, the very lives of them who are holy, are convictions to his Conscience, and if the word be held out, he is ready to fall down, as not able to stand up under the light and evidence of it. In such men wee have a friend within them, even their own natural consciences are on our side, and ready to take part with us against themselves, and fly in their own faces, telling them such and such things ought not to be done. But now in the other; neither the examples of holy men, nor precepts of the word, do so farre convince them, for in outward appearance, they walk as blamelessly as the best. Nay and natural Conscience is also for them, and being satisfied with some general performances of duty, is ready to take part with them, and to withstand any conviction that can be alleged. You see this in the Scribes and Pharisees, they walked blame-

blamelessly in the general to the eyes of the world, as you hearby his confession in opposition to the Publican; and they fasted and prayed, and did much, and by that the mouth of conscience was stopped, the quarrels of conscience were answered, and you finde how hard it was for Christ himself to convince them. They were so far from being convinced by his example, that they thought themselves more strict than hee; he did, but they would not accompany themselves with sinners, and therefore they gave out he was a wine bibber, a glutton, a friend of Publicans; and for his doctrine, this was so farre from convincing them, that they thought their lives more strict than his precepts; they were followers of the Law, exact and rigid in legal observances, and thought his doctrine too licentious, too full of liberty for them. So that is the first, it is hard to convince them.

Hard to humble them.

2 It is hard to humble them. Humiliation follows conviction, if hard to convince, hard to humble. Do wee denounce threatenings against sinners? alas! they are none of them, these threatenings do not concern them but others, for their parts they walk unblameably in the world. It is not the mercyes, nor the judgements, the promises, nor the threatenings, the word, nor the works of God which humble them. In others there may be some natural tenderness, some remorse of spirit when they hear of Gods judgements against sin. But for this man, *it is not all the terrors of the Lord, not all the humbling, breaking discoveries of sin, or judgement which fasten upon him to humble him.* No mans heart so hard as the Hypocrites, hee hath not only a natural hardnesse, but a contracted hardnesse; nay a fortified and strengthened hardnesse, his heart is fortified against all reproof, against all the denunciations of wrath and judgement. You have a taste of it in the Scribes and Pharisees. You know they were Hypocrites, hee who knew their hearts, better than they knew their own, tells them so. And it was not all the miracles hee did in his life, nor all the wonders which hee shewed at his death, which could break and humble their hard hearts; you see *the Sun was darkned, the earth quakes and trembles, the vail of the Temple was rent, the graves open, the rocks cleave asunder, yet all this doth not move their hard hearts.*

Hard to reclaim them.

3 *It is hard to reclaim them, for*

1 The Devil hath got greater power in them than in others.

2 The Forts of Sinne and Satan are more strengthened in them.

3 The means of reclaiming lesse efficacious. Hee is able to fit out Sermons and duties without any manner of working upon his spirit at all. That which moves others, moves not him, which works upon the hearts of others, doth leave his heart unwrought upon. He is a man, as I told you, prayer-proof, Sermon-proof, and

and Ordinance-proof; no Mercy, no judgement, no promise; no threatening, no word, no works, no prayer, no Sacraments; no physick, no salve, no counsell, no advice, no light of nature, no light of example; no private help, no publick exhortation prevails with his heart; hee's a man in the fore-loyn hope; his condition neer desperate. Custome in the use of things, doth take away the power of working. You see in your bodies a little thing works upon the humors, when you are not used to it, whereas if accustomed to it, a much greater will not stir the humors.

I have read that *Mithridates* by accustomed himself to eat Poyson, at last durst venture upon poyson as meat, nothing did hurt him. The customeable use of things, takes away the power of working. So it is here, the custome of Ordinances in a formal way, doth take away the power of working by them. You see it in the Sacrament; may bee, when you came first to the Sacrament, then Conscience had some natural tenderdesse in it, and you came trembling to this Ordinance, fearing lest you should prophane it; *and by that eat and drink your own Condemnation.* But now the custome of prophanation, hath taken away the terror of prophaning this Ordinance; now you come and tremble not. So for the word, time was, when Conscience was green and tender, that the word came with more majesty, more authority on your spirits. Every command came with power, every threat came with trembling; but now you can sit under the most powerful, quickening, convincing, awaking, dispensations of it, and your souls never moved. And hence is it, that your custome with the Ordinances in a customary way, takes off the life, and power, and workings of Ordinances. As custome in sin doth harden the heart, and makes the heart more difficult to bee wrought upon: so custome in duty if it bee done in a formal customeable way. I would rather deal, and should have more hopes of doing good to him who is openly prophane, notoriously wicked, than such a man who lyes lurking under Ordinances, and goes on in a formal and customeable performance of these dutys, without any spirit or life in the doing of them. Thus you see the first, 'tis a difficult cure.

2 *It is a painful cure.* It will cost thee much pain, many gripes and greifs, many Prayers and tears, much humiliation and sorrow before it can be wrought. Nay, 'tis a cure wrought by undoing all that thou hast done, thou must unravel all, unpray thy prayers undo thy services. Thou must not go forward in the way wherein thou art, but must come back all the way thou hast gone, and go another way; if ever thou come to heaven. And this will cost a man some pain. Suppose a man were going to some place, and had gone much of his journey, were now come, (as hee thought) near his journey's end, and one should come to him,

It is a painful
cure.

him, and tell him, Sir, you are clean out of the way, you must go back again, on ride all this way you have come, &c. Of how irksome, how chardly would this down with a man at the end of his journey: especially the way being pleasant wherein hee was, and full of delight, but the other rough and foul in which hee was to go. Alas! would hee say, is there no way but turning back? is it not possible to strike over? this is irksome. Why so is it with a man here, it may be thou hast set out for heaven, and thou hast gone all thy life in a fair smooth way, and art now come, as thou thinkest, even to the end of thy journey. And will it not bee a hard thing for a man to turn back, to begin in another way, and that a straighter, a rougher, and a deeper way? Why I tell thee, this must bee done before ever thou come to heaven.

It is with a sound Christian and an Hypocrite, as it is with two men, at the top of two houses in a narrow street, one would think that they could easily come to one another, easily reach; but the truth is, hee must come down the height where hee is, before hee can go up to him: A grosse and open sinner, is nearer to him, than a formal hypocrite. As Christ saith, *Easier for Publicans and Harlots*.

And now judge, is it not a very hard thing and difficult, for a man to undoe all hee hath done, to give up all for lost, to come down from the height to which hee hath attained, not without much pains. To turn back that way, wherein hee hath ridden with much difficulty. This is a hard thing, &c. *what flesh and blood can bear this.*

So that it is not only a difficult, but a painful cure.

1. In respect of the medicines that are so bee applyed, hard physick, humbling, lancing, cutting, dismemb'ring, cutting off right hands, &c.

2. In respect of the distemper wherewith these medicines are to encounter.

3. In respect of the pains, gripes, griefs, you must endure in the cure.

But this I cannot insist upon. The truth is, the cure is so painfull, that your spirits would rather continue the disease, than submit to the plaister. But now though the cure be difficult, 'tis possible, 'tis easy with God, though hard to us. And if God have given thee a heart to desire a cure, and a spirit willing to submit to any means may bee used, it is a fair way towards the cure. Well then to come to the cure itself. Having searched thy spirit, and upon diligent search discovered Hypocrisy.

1. Labour to convince thy heart of the evil and mischief of an unsound spirit. It is a thing which makes thy person, thy performance odious unto God, hee hates thy person, hee hates thy

Prayers

prayers, as you see, *Iſa. 1. 14. Your new Moons, and your Sabbathes, and your appointed feasts, my ſoul hateth them;* which yet were high extraordinary ſervices. And now judge what a fearful thing it is to ſtand under the hatred of the great God of Heaven and Earth. What doſt thou think will bee the end of thee? why, you ſhall ſee, *Matth. 24. and the laſt. Thou ſhalt bee caſt into the lake which burnes with fire and brimſtone,* and not only caſt in, but into the hottest place, where there ſhall not bee a drop of water to a lake of fire. For it is ſaid of all other ſinners, that they ſhall have their portion with Hypocrites. The Hypocrite ſhall have the largeſt portion, hee is the top of that black crew of damned ſouls. For the preſent thou loſeſt all the good in Earth which others do enjoy, and for the future thou loſeſt all the good in Heaven, which others ſhall enjoy. Nay, and thou gaineſt ſorer, ſharper, more unſupportable damnation, than others ſhall have. Thy duties, thy prayers, thy hearings which would have miniſtered comfort to thee, if they had been right, do now aggravate and increaſe thy torment, being unſound. Every Sermon, Prayer, Duty, is but as another ſtick carried to that ſtructure of fire, to make it hotter, and greater for thee, becauſe done with an unſound ſpirit.

2. Conſider there is a God. Atheiſme is a great ground of Hypocrisy, and there is no man more an Atheiſt, than an Hypocrite. Well then, think there is a God. I tell thee, the very beleeſ of this would ſtrike down many baſe ends, which thou haſt in thy ſervice of him. And think him to bee ſuch a God as hee is. That this God is an all-ſeeing God, one who ſearcheth the heart, who tryeth the reins. One, who knows the ſecret turnings and windings of thy deceitful ſoul. Though thou mayeſt diſſemble it with men, bee one thing upon the ſtage, another thing in the tyring houſe; one thing in action, another thing in heart and affection. Yet thou canſt not diſſemble with God, before whom thou lieſt open, cut up to the back bone, anatomized, all thy internals are ſeen, as the Word ſignifies in *Heb. 4. 13.*

This thought brought home, and ſuffered to lye upon thy ſpirit in ſerious conſideration, would e'ne half work the cure, it would cure all groſs Hypocrisy, ſtrike down all by-ends, and baſe ends, which thy ſpirit aims at in the doing of holy duties, and would do much in the cure of cloſe Hypocrites in the mending of falſe Principles, an honeſt heart, would not bee falſe to God, though God ſhould not ſee him, hee loves God, hee is the friend of God, and you know a friend will bee true to his friend, as yvöll abſent from him as preſent vvith him, vvhen hee ſees him not, as vvell as vvhen his eyes are on him. But I am not nowy to deal vvith a true ſincere heart. I am laying downy means for the cure of a falſe heart, and a great one this is. Think and beleeve, there is a God, and this God an all-ſeeing God, vvho knows thy heart

3. Means.

and when the works are done, and the heart is pure, and

and spirit. And as hee is all eye to see, so hee is all hand to punish thee, if thy heart bee not sound vvith him.

3. Means.

3. Means of cure is; Thou must bee nev made, the vvay to mend thee, is to nev make thee; thou must bee all undone again; taken in peeces, and made up again, before ever thou canst be better. Some peeing and patching up vvill not serve the turn, but thou must have a nev making, before thou bee better. There is no mending the stream, till there bee an healing of the fountain. The fountain and spring within thee is infected and corrupted, the heart is unsound, and what can bee expected from an unclean heart, but unclean acts? from an unsound spirit, but unsound services? and therefore this must bee made new before ever you bee cured. Thou must have a new Judgement, for thou seest by a false light. Thou must have a new will, for this is corrupt. Thou must have a new heart, for this is desperately wicked. I tell thee, there is no mending thee, but by new making thee. You may go and patch up your selves, but it is but like the putting of a new peece of cloth into an old garment, it breaks out again, and the rent will bee made worse.

4. Means.

4. Is Prayer, which is *instar omnium*. Oh! desire God with David, to make thy heart sound in his Statutes, sound in Prayer, sound in hearing, sound in obedience. That all thou doest may arise from right Principles, have a right rise, go by a right rule, and bee directed to a right end. Pray that God would give thee sound Principles, and sound purposes. That that little measure of Grace hee implanteth in thee, may bee accompanied with abundance of sincerity and truth of heart.

And having gotten a sincere heart, let it bee your care to fence and guard your heart against Hypocrisy.

I will give you but one preservative which is this.

1. Before you go upon any duty, clear the sincerity of your hearts, make your end as high as may bee. Set out aright, loose off well, begin in God, in Gods strength, in Gods grace, in Gods assistance. A good beginning, will make as good a close.

2. When thou art upon the duty, then look to thy heart, suffer no base, no by-ends to steal in, to poison all thou doest. Keep thine eye stedfast upon God in the doing of the duty. Do the duty as if there were no men, no hopes, no fears, no rewards in the World, as if none but God and thou were in the World.

3. Afterwards when the duty is done, if there hath been any thing, if God have quickened, enlarged, inflamed, humbled thy heart, give God all the glory. Beware leass it bee vvith thee, as it was vvith Paul, and his company, that when a fire is kindled; a viper come out of the heat. Hath God kindled a fire in thy heart, warmed, inflamed thy spirit? Oh! beware that a viper come not out of the heat, a viper of pride, of vain glory. Know this, they that seek Gods glory in the work, will give God the glory, when the work is done. If then there have been any

good,

good, let God inherit all the glory; but if any evil, take it to thy self, for it came from thee, and let it bee thy work to lament it, to bee humbled for it.

And now this Rule will bee of special use. There are four uses.

1. This will fence thy heart, guard and strengthen thy heart against Hypocrisy, this will keep out Hypocrisy, here is no place of entrance for it.

2. It will keep down Hypocrisy, for Hypocrisy gets no ground so long as it is seen and mourned for.

3. This clears the heart in the main, that thou art no Hypocrite, though there may bee Hypocrisy in thee, yet being seen, fought against, mourned for, resisted, it reigns not, it shall not denominate thee an Hypocrite.

4. It will clear thee of the sin of Hypocrisy, God will never charge thee for that which thou chargest thy self withall, hee will not impute that to thee which thou imputeest to thy self. That which is thy misery, God will never impute to thee as sin, Hypocrisy seen, mourned for, sighed under, resisted, fought and prayed against, shall never bee a condemning Hypocrisy. And so much shall now serve for the first branch of the exhortation, with the motives to get sincerity, with the remedies to cure Hypocrisy, and preservatives against it.

Second Branch of the Exhortation is. Having gotten, labour to clear this to your own souls, that your hearts are sincere. Clear sincerity. It is a thing possible to bee cleared, a man may come to evidence to himself the sincerity of his own graces and gracious performances. And it is a thing necessary to bee known, in respect of your peace, of your comfort. So necessary, that you can neither live with comfort, nor dye with comfort, unless you bee able in some measure to clear the sincerity of your hearts, the integrity of your spirits. And being a thing so necessary, I will here lay down some Rules and directions, for the better inabling of you to this present duty.

1. Rule.

1. *Make a through and sound search, deceits lye low, Hypocrisy is spun of a fine thread, and is not discerned without diligent search.* A false evidence is the fruit of a superficial search. Though gross Hypocrisy is seen without search, yet close Hypocrisy must bee narrowly searcht into, otherwise you shall not bee able to discover it. Here you must not only read over your selves in your actions, but in your affections, not only in your practises, but also in your Principles. Hypocrisy lyes low, it is a root sin, *The heart of man is deceitful above measure, saith the Lord, who knows it?* Jer. 17. 9. like a crested picture, on the one side an Angel, on the other a Devil. And I must tell you, that sin lyes at the

bottom of a deceitful heart, and therefore it will ask some pains to discover it. It was a fair speech of the Children of *Israel*, Deut. 5. 29. Whatever the Lord shall say unto us, wee will do. And it may bee they meant as they spake for the time, they were not aware of deceit in their hearts. But hee that saw further into them, than they into themselves, discovered deceit to lye at the bottome, below, which they were not aware of, and therefore it follows, O that there were such an heart in my people! alas! it is but a present pang of conscience, there is no such heart in them. So it was well spoken of *Hazael*, 2 King. 8. 12, 13. when *Elisha* told him what bloody cruelties hee should exercise towards *Israel*. *Is thy servant a Dog*, saith hee, hee thought the Prophet did him a great deal of wrong; what, should ever hee exercise such beastly cruelty? but hee saw not the bottome of his heart, as was seen after in the next Chapter. So it was well spoken by them in *Fer.* 42. 6, 7. 20, 21. When the Princes desired *Feremy* to inquire of the Lord, whether they should go, and bound themselves with an oath to obey, whithersoever God bade them go, they would go. But there was a deceit lay low, they had a secret resolution to go into *Egypt*, and thought God would have sent them thither, and then they would have been taken for an obedient people. But when the message came contrary, they shewed the falseness and hollowness of their spirit, and fall into flat contradiction against the word of the Lord. The word that thou hast spoken wee will not do. And therefore seeing the heart is so exceedingly deceitfull, there is great need of thorough search and tryal of our spirits. If you take the first verdict the heart gives up, you are likely to bee deceived, and therefore wee are to observe the Apostles Rule, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *to examine and prove*; that is, not only to examine, and so take the first Evidence the heart gives up, but prove the Evidence, whether it bee true or no. Deceits lye low. As for example.

Enquiry is made whether I have Faith, &c.

2. Rule.

2. *Labour to acquaint thy self with the most sure and clearing Evidences of sincerity, and try thy heart by them.* It may bee, thou hearest the Word, and perhaps with joy, thou bewailest sin, and perhaps with tears, thou avoideest gross sins with care, thou opposest common corruptions with zeal. All these are comfortable signes, but they are not infallible evidences of Grace. For what is in all this which *Ahab*, which *Saul*, which *Herod*, which *Judas* had not? It is a great deal of wisdom in the tryal of our selves, to bee acquainted with those sorts of evidences, which are of a clearing nature, of which I will give you two properties.

1. Those Evidences which are clearing, are such as the Word

Word doth countenance; What ever evidences the Word doth not countenance, they are but the presumptions of our own heart; and never give us comfort in life or death. It is the book must cast us, or clear us, at the last day.

A second property of clearing evidences. They must bee such as are universally reciprocal, distinctive evidences. That is, such evidences as are incompatible with any whose hearts are not sincere, and concomitant with them whose hearts are sincere. They must bee such as are essential to a Christian as a Christian. If there bee any who hath them, and is not a Christian, is not sincere, or any, who is a Christian sincere, and hath them not, they are not right. They must bee such as do manifest every person in whom they are to bee sincere, and do discover, where ever they are not, what ever shews they have, they are not sincere.

I have told you formerly on another subject, that what ever another man may do or have, and yet not bee in Christ, yet not bee sincere, will never bee a sufficient evidence to mee, that having or doing that, I am sincere. And by these two properties there will bee a great deal cast down from being clearing evidences, if I had time to insist on them. Thou prayes, thou hears, thou dost much in the ways of God, but this will not bee enough to clear thy sincerity, for I have shewed you that a man may do all this, and more too, yet not sincere, and therefore these will bee no clearing evidences. And therefore let us go by this rule, examine what are those clearing evidences of your sincerity, and examine your selves by them.

Obj. *But how shall I know what are those heart-clearing evidences, that so I may examine my self by them?*

Ans. I have shewed you some properties, you see of evidences of this nature. I have also cast down many from being sufficient to clear your sincerity. Wee will now give you some which are clearing evidences.

1 Some taken from the disposition of mourning.

1 An Hypocrite cannot mourn for all sin, it may be hee may mourn for general, for common, and sensuall finnes, but not for close, spiritual and secret finnes, his unbeleef, his hypocrisy, pride.

Demonstrations of sincerity in 1. Mourning in part of Sin.

2 An hypocrite cannot mourn for sin as sin, for sin in its own nature, but as clad with wrath and punishment. Now then, if God have given thee a heart to mourn for all sins, and for sin as sin; it is an evidence of thy sincerity.

1 An hypocrite cannot mourn for the want of fulness of ordinances. 2 Nor can hee mourn for want of any Ordinance, out of discovery of the beauty and excellency in them. Now then, if God give thee a heart to mourn for, &c.

2 Of Ordinances wants

3 An Hypocrite cannot mourn for sins of others, nor 2 for the want of growth in himself. If therefore God hath given thee such

2 In sin of others.

a heart

a heart, &c. thou must conclude thine own sincerity.

Sincerity of
Desires,

2 For matter of desires.

1 He cannot desire the death of all sin, hee hath some darling, &c.

2 Hee cannot desire the death of any sin, as sin, but for other respects. If therefore God hath given thee a heart desirous to bee purged, as well as pardoned, that desires the death of all, and of sin, as sin, &c.

Again in point of desire of grace. 1 An Hypocrite doth not desire all grace, there are some he would not own, hee loves not universal exactnesse. 2 Hee desires not any grace as grace, in its own native beauty and excellency, but at times, death, &c. and then as a stalking horse. If therefore God hath given thee a heart to desire and thirst after all grace, exact conformity to God in all things, and to desire grace, as grace, &c.

Of Affections.
1 To God.

3 For matters of affections. 1 An Hypocrite cannot love God for himself. 2 Hee cannot love God as God, as in his own nature, so contrary. If therefore God hath given thee a heart to love him for himself, &c.

To Saints

2 Again towards the Saints.

1 An Hypocrite hee loves not all the Saints, some hee may, not all. 2 Hee loves not the Saints as the Saints, but for other respects. If therefore God hath given thee a heart to love all Saints, poor godliness, as well as rich, grace in russet and gray, as well as grace in Silks, &c. And to love them as Saints, as having the image of Christ on them. To have communion with them, to love brotherly communion, to love them most, where you see most grace, &c.

So for hatred.

1 He hates not all sin. 2 He hates no sin, as sin, if any at all. Now if God hath given thee a heart, &c.

3 To Ordinances.

So again. 1 He loves not all the Ordinances. 2 He loves not any Ordinance as an Ordinance. Hee hath no savour in an Ordinance, he hath no prizing of an Ordinance, hee hath no hunger after an Ordinance, no rejoycing in an Ordinance, no care to walk answerable to the Ordinances. If then God hath given thee a heart to do all this, these are speciall evidences.

Thus you see in brief I have shewed you a taste of clearing evidences, by which you may examine your own spirits, &c.

3 General Rule.

3 If you would clear your sincerity, then remember this Rule. Take not up your evidences from the carriage of your spirits, either when they are at best, or when they are at worst, but in a middle way, wherein thou art most thy self, this will best clear your sincerity. If thou seek for an evidence when thy spirit is at

at the worst, *thou may sometime finde it too low to afford thee any thing*; if at the best, *thou may find it too high to be a continuing evidence*, and so in the one thou maiest bee discouraged, in the other deceived, many have flashes of affection in some present heat, who yet have not soundnesse of spirit in them. *Herod heard the Word with joy*, here was a heat, but all his joy would not inable him to part with his *Herodias*, no soundnesse. Let it be your wisdome to take up your evidences in a middle way, neither when at best, nor when at worst, that is your most constant frame, and that temper is most thy self, in the other we are carried above our selves in comforts, or cast below our selves in temptations, and there is no sure judging, nor the best judging of the frame.

4 Rule.

4 *Judge not of the sincerity of thy spirit by some particular acts.* But let the constant frame of your spirits and general conversation discover it. If particular actions might determine the case, wee should sometime conclude those unsound, who are sincere, and them sincere, who are yet unsound. You may look upon a child of God, and see him sometimes to have his planetical and extravagant motions, *though the constant course and bent of his spirit bee Godward.* We read of *David* murdering, and committing adultery, fearful sins! Wee read of *Joseph* swearing, *Felix* cursing the day of his Nativity, falling out with his stars, *Pharaoh* vexing, *Peter* denying, *Thomas* not beleeving. And if you judge by the particular Acts, though exceeding bad, you will condemn the generation of the just.

On the Contrary, you shall see *Pharaoh* desiring the prayer of *Moses*, *Balaam* in a good mood, desiring to dye the death of the righteous, *Saul* condemning of himself, *Abel* humbling of himself, *Ninevey* repenting, *Felix* trembling, *Herod* hearing *John Baptist* joyfully. And if we now judge by these particular actions, though seemingly good, wee shall justify those whom God condemns.

Wee have a maxime in Logick, that no general Rule can be established upon a particular instance, and another, that no particular instance can overthrow a general rule. So here as no man can safely conclude from no better premises, than from some few actions, though in themselves materially and substantially good, that the heart is therefore sincere. So on the contrary, no man ought to conclude, because of some planetical and extravagant motions, that a mans heart is unsound. We are not to judge of sincerity, by some particular actions good or evil, but wee are to take up our judgement of our selves by the general frame, bent and disposition of a mans heart, together with his general and constant conversation in the way of God; and this will best discover our selves to our selves. So much for the fourth Rule.

Rule

5. Rule.

The fifth Rule whereby we shall be enabled to clear the sincerity of our hearts, is; Be carefull to read your spirits, and take exact notice of your hearts at sometimes more especially. God in the wisdom of his Providence, doth single out some special times, wherein hee discovers the hypocrisy of the unsound, and declares the sincerity of his own. It is very seldome that God doth suffer a man to end his days, before hee have tryed him, and so discovered him one way or another. The young man in the Gospel went on fairly for a long time, and it is like, thought his condition good enough, but at last you see, Christ put him to the tryall, and by that discovered to him the unsoundnesse of his heart. Herod hee went on fairely for a time, hee heard *Fohn*, hee heard him often; hee heard him gladly, nay, and reformed too in many things, but at last God discovered his unsoundness, God uncafed him, and made known the deceit of his heart. So *Saul* went on for a while, but at last God discovered him, So *Simon Magus* and *Balaam*. And as God hath times for the discovery of Hypocrisy in the wicked, so hee hath some special times and occasions, wherein he doth discover the sincerity of his own people. *Moses* was a holy man, but hee had the time of his tryall, hee might have been esteemed the sonne of *Pharaohs* Daughter, have enjoyed all the plenty and honour of the Court, but hee refused to be called the son of *Pharaohs* daughter, sleighted all that honour, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, here was the discovery of his sincerity, *Heb. 11. 24, 25.*

Abraham hee was a holy man, but yet he passed through times of tryall too. And they were great ones. To name but one, God commanded him to offer up his son in sacrifice, here was a triall, a great triall, *Gen. 22.*

Had hee been only to have parted with a dutiful Servant, it had been something, but to part with a Son, that is more,

If with a Son, yet but an adopted sonne, the tryall had not been so great, but this was a natural son.

If with a natural son, yet if hee had been but one of many, that tryall had not been so great, but this was not only his own, but his only son.

If with his own Son, if with his only son, yet if *Abraham* had been young, and so probable to have had more, the tryall had not been so great. But it was with his own, his only son, and the son of his old age, hee was never like to have more.

Nay yet further, though he had been, &c. yet if he had been an *Ismael*, and not an *Isaac*, the triall had not been so great, but it was to part with his *Isaac*, a Child of many prayers, and of many promises, and in whom his heart delighted.

6. And

6. And again, if hee had been to part with him in the ordinary way of nature, by natural death, the tryal not so great, but hee was to part with him in a Sacrifice; wherein hee was to bee mangled and cut in peeces.

7. But yet had another been the executioner of his child, it had been some mitigation: But *Abraham* himself must bee his executioner, hee must do this sad act.

And not to do it among his friends, who perhaps might have stept in, and comforted him in this tryal, but hee was to go three dayes journey to an unknown place, and there hee was to take away the life of him hee loved so dearly. Yet herein *Abraham* obeyed Gods command, and therein shewed his sincerity. When the Precept of tryal might seem to contradict the Precept of Obedience, when his dutiful Obedience to the one, might seem to speak his undutifulness to the other; yet herein hee declared his sincerity. Whereupon God tells him, now I know thou loves mee, when now thou hast made it known, now thou hast discovered thy sincerity, seeing thou hast not withheld thy only son, *Gen. 22. 12.* here was sincerity, *now I know thou findest God.* The like I might instance in *Job*, in *David*, in *Mordecai*, they had their discovering times, times of tryal. So that God doth still single out some special times wherein hee discovers the sincerity of his own people. And if you would bee ever able to clear your sincerities, read the carriage of your hearts at these special times. One quarter of an hour may give a man surer evidence of his sincerity or hypocrisy, than all the time of his life besides.

There are five special times, wherein you may have the advantage, if you bee careful, to read your own spirits, to clear the sincerity of your hearts.

1. In times of darkness and temptation. Read the aings and goings out of your spirits at such times; an unsound spirit will now fall from God, desist in his duty, strike sail. But the sound spirit, hee will hold closer to God, and follow him when hee seems to forsake him. Hee will go on to love him, although hee bee not able to clear whether ever hee shall bee beloved of him. Hee will repent of sin, though hee bee not able to evidence whether ever God will pardon sin. Hee will go on to obey and serve God, though hee bee not able to determine whether ever God will reward his obedience or no. Such like dispositions do now break forth in a sincere heart, in the times of greatest darkness, which in times of clearer manifestation have no occasion to shew themselves. And these are the most undoubted evidences of your sincerity, which perhaps you shall ever meet withall in your lives. As wicked men do discover their greatest corruptions in their highest advancements; so Gods people do discover, and exert, and put forth the highest acts of grace in their lowest and meanest conditions. As the Sun shewes

Read your spirits in times of

1. Darkness.

Cujus faciem
timet, ejus fa-
ciem invocat.

greatest glory when it is lowest, when setting. So, &c.

As Christ set out the greatest acts of divinity in his lowest abasements, then hee sealed up the beams of the Sun, rent rocks, graves open, the earth trembles, &c. So the Saints, &c. This is that the Psalmist saith, *unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness*. Where the heart is unsound, it is dark in the greatest light; so on the contrary, there is light in the greatest darkness. Hypocrisy is like painted windows which let in no light; sincerity is like windows of Glasse.

Times of manifestation.

2. See how your hearts and spirits work towards God, and towards sin in times of light, and clearer manifestations of God. Where the heart is unsound, comfort doth him no good, hee will do something in a storm, then perhaps pray, &c. but hee will do nothing in a calm. Comforts make him more careless, more loose, more remiss in his Christian way. Where on the contrary, hee who hath a sound spirit, as hee is carried strongly towards God, when hee with-holds his manifestations: so if God do but let in a beam of his Countenance into his soul, hee rejoiceth more in it, than in a World. Nay, and these comforts do quicken him to further duty, hee cannot lye at anchor, but hee must launch out into the deep, and lay out himself, his parts, his abilities, &c. I have sometimes told you that quickness and comfort may bee separated, a man may have comfort without quickness, hee may have joy without life. But quickening was never separated from comfort. A man cannot have joy, but there will bee life, &c. Affections are like tinder, and Comfort like sparks, not a spark of comfort can fall upon the heart, but the whole soul is set a fire, and carried strongly on after God. Comforts from God ever lead the soul to communion with God.

Of outward distress.

3. See how your spirits do work towards God, in times of outward distress and calamities upon you. 1. An unsound spirit, hee is for the most part proud and impatient under Gods hand, and ready to think God doth him wrong in afflicting him. But where the spirit is sincere, hee is humble, hee is patient, hee layes his mouth in the dust, kisseth the rod, and accepteth of the punishment of his iniquity, as you see the phrase, *Levit. 26. 41*. Example in *Aaron*. 2. Again, an unsound spirit, hee roars under the lashes, cries under the affliction, never complains of the sin. As you see, *Fer. 30. 15*. *Why cryest thou, &c.* But where the heart is sincere, no evil troubles him, so much as the evil of sin. You see it in *David*, when plagued. 3. Again, an unsound spirit, hee desires to have the stroke removed, not to have his heart amended. The other desires rather the amending of his heart, than the removal of the stroke. Saith *Bernard*, I had rather God should better my heart, than remove his hand, rather continue my strokes, than my sins. You see this in *Job*, when Gods hand was on him, *Job 34. 32*. *That which I see not, teach thou mee,*

Flagella dolent, quare flagellantur non dolent.

Malim erudiri quam cruci.

me, and if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more, as if hee had said, Lord I know not the particular cause of this distress, what it is thou aims at, what I see not, teach thou, &c.

4. A fourth time, wherein to read your hearts is in times of prosperity. An unsound spirit grows worse by mercy; mercy, deadens, straitens his heart, *Isa. 26. 10. Let favour bee shewed, &c.* Hazael professed much when hee was low, but no sooner advanced, but mark then how hee acted against God, his Church and people, endeavouring to make his railing their ruine. So *Saul Jehu*. Where now on the contrary, where the heart is sound, all their railings, raise God, God is advanced in all their advancements.

And the higher God sets up them, the higher will they endeavour to raise and set up God, his glory, his cause, his people. Mercies on an enemy strengthen him to sin, but on a friend strengthen to service, hee is but a man of greater ability to serve God. Many think if they were but so rich, so great, Oh how would they advance God and his cause! how make all to serve him, but thy heart may deceive thee, if thy heart bee not sound, the higher God raiseth thee, the lower thou wilt lay him, the more good God doth for thee, the more evil thou wilt do to him. It is a special time to read your spirits, to see to your sincerity, in time of prosperity. There is no tryal in afflictions alone, they have something in them may make men humble, meek, &c. but look to them in times of prosperity of a Church, Religion, cause of God. Many men have stood firm in the times of affliction of a Church, which stagger, fall back in times of redemption of a Church. That is the saddest. It is no strange thing for men to stagger, to fall in the times of a declining in the Church, for fear, &c. But that is a corrupt heart indeed, corrupt with a witness that falls away in prosperity. That is the fourth time.

5. See how your spirits work in time of difficulty of danger. An unsound heart thinks how hee may avoid the danger; a sincere spirit, how hee may avoid the sin *Heb. 12. 4.* striving against sin, not against danger, trouble, but against sin; to keep their consciences pure and undefiled. An unsound spirit thinks how hee may save his carcass, a sound Christian how hee may keep his conscience. As *Epaminondas* who resolved to keep his buckler, or dye for it, being wounded to death.

Cryes out, *num saluus clypeus meus?* intimating hee was not hurt, if his buckler were safe. What hee of his buckler, a sincere heart cryes out of his conscience, *num salua conscientia?* An unsound spirit hee sees and judgeth his safety sometimes to lye in the neglect of duty, and therefore in times of danger hee will baulk and decline his duty, for fear of man. But a sound spirit, hee sees his safety to lye in the doing of his duty, and his dan-

Vultis in vin-
cula injure,
vultis in mor-
tem, voluptas
est mihi.

Nihil nisi pecca-
tum timeo.

Quod si quis
dixerit.

ger in the neglect of it. An unsound spirit will rather choose sin than affliction, *Job 36. 21.* But where the spirit is sincere, he will rather chuse the greatest evil, than the least sin, as *Daniel*, and the three children. *Ambrose* saith, *will you cast me into prison, will you take away my life, all this is desirable rather than sin.* And when *Endoxia* the Empresse, threatned *Chrysostome* with banishment, go tell her, saith he, *I fear nothing in the world, but sin.* And the reason is, because they look on sin as the grand and universal evil, the womb of evill, and all other evils, but the births of sin. It hath been the founder of hell, for before sin, no hell, twas that which laid the corner stone in that dark vault, nay it is that which hath filled hell with those treasures of wrath, and still addes to it, and increaseth the fewel, *Rom. 2. 5.* Nay, they look not only upon sin as an evil universal, but as universally evil, no good in sin. And therefore when the Apostle would speak the worst of Sin, hee could find no name worse, than in its own to set it out by, *sinfull sin, as you see Rom. 7. 13.*

These may bee the special times wherein you may read your own spirits, and bee able to gather evidences of your sincerity.

3. Branch of Exhortation.

You that have cleared your sincerity, do you labour to maintain the evidences of it, &c.

4. Branch of Exhortation.

To exhort them whose hearts are sincere, that they would declare the sincerity of their hearts on all occasions. I have told you, that God hath special times for the tryal and discovery of the sincerity of his own people. And it should be our wisdomes to take notice of those times and seasons, and our care at those times to declare our sincerity. *Balaam* had once a time to declare his sincerity, when hee was hired with wealth and honor, to curse the People of God, but not approving himself at that time, hee was branded for an hypocrite for ever. *Saul* had once a time to discover his sincerity, when hee was commanded to go and slay all, but missing that time of declaring sincerity, hee is branded, &c. The young man had a time too, when *Christ* propounded to him, to part with all and follow him, but missing that, not taking time to declare sincerity, &c. *Solomon* had a time too, but he was too neglectfull, and what follows: hee is questioned whether ever saved or no, he is pictured between heaven and hell, as if men knew not where to fix him. These had all special times afforded to them of declaring their sincerity, and like vile wretches, they make them times of discovering Hypocrisy. And there is not a man of you, but God doth afford you some or special other occasions in your lives of declaring the sincerity of your hearts, which if God give wisdom to discern of, and a heart to close with, you will bee happy, but if not, you will smart for it. God may suffer you to lye and roar upon your death-bed, for want of an evidence of
since-

sincerity, because you are neglective of declaring your Sincerity, when God affords you an occasion of it. Oh what sad thoughts will these bee, when thou shalt look upon thy life, and think with thy self, Such a time I was in such a place, in such an office, had such an opportunity to shew my self for God, to advance his glory, to do good to his Church, his people, his cause, and yet vile wretch I neglected it, I bawked it, I was unserviceable, or I used my power, my strength, my authority, as an Engine against God, against his people, against his cause, this will be trouble with a witness.

Well then, if you would prevent this, let every one in their several places and stations, declare the Sincerity of their hearts. Make your places, your power, your parts, your riches, your friends, serviceable to God, to his Church, to his Cause. As Christ made all his Ascensions for the good of his Church, so do you. Think it not much to adventure and hazard any thing for the glory of God, the good of the Church. Pray for the Church, act for the Church, do for God, suffer for God, run this brave adventure to hazard all for the good of the Church of God. Hee who raiseth up Gods glory, though by the ruines of himself, hee who advances Gods cause, though himself lye low for it, shall never be looser by it, hath bargain good enough. You know those places, *Hee who prizeth father and mother, riches, lands, before mee, is not worthy of mee.* Again, *There is no man forsaketh father, or mother, riches, or lands, for my sake, &c. but shall have a hundred fold, &c.* So, *Who saves his life, shall loose it, but hee who loses his life, &c.* So, *Hee who denies me before men, him will I deny.* It is now a time wherein wicked men do shew their corruptions, do you make use of it, as a time to shew your graces, when they discover their hypocrisy, do you declare your sincerity. I have looked and wondered to see those men who have stood firm in the times of affliction of a Church, should stagger and fall back in the times of redemption of a Church. It is not so strange for a man to fall in the times of the declining of a Church. Then fear may make men stagger, as in *Peter*. But that is a corrupt heart indeed, corrupt with a witness, who falls back, and flies off, in the times of reforming of a Church, to see men to fall back not in the times of persecution, but in the times of reformation, this is a sad thing. It may be weakness of grace, which occasions a man to decline and fall back in the times of persecution, but it is a wickednesse, and height of wickednesse, it shews a spirit opposite to God and goodnesse, to bee worse in times of reformation. Wee see it so in many in our times, and seeing unsound spirits to discover their corruptions, let Gods people now discover their graces. When *Israel* halted between God and *Baal*, making a mixture of divine worship and idolatrous together, one to bee let off by the other, that poison might bee swallowed down without scrupling, then did *Elijah* take occasion

to declare his sincerity, when hee cryed, how long do you halt &c. When *Haman* had plotted the death of all the Jews, and had gotten the Kings warrant for the doing of it, then was it a special occasion for *Mordecai* and *Hester* to declare their sincerity, which they did, *Hester* 4. 15, 16. When *Israel* had joyned themselves to *Baal Peor*, then was it a special occasion for *Moses* to declare his sincerity, which hee did, *Numb.* 25. 5. You see what honour *Phineas* wonne by taking that special occasion of declaring his sincerity. The like of *Levi*, in *Deut.* 33. 9. So of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22. consider, 1. God calls on you to declare your sincerity. 2. The Church calls on you.

1. Those abroad, our poor distressed brethren in *Ireland*, they cry in the language of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 94. 16. *Who will rise up for mee against the evil doers*, or who will stand up for mee against the workers of iniquity? Do you declare your sincerity by helping them with your purses, with your prayers, and with your persons, so far as you are called out to it.

2. Our own Church and Nation calls upon us to declare our sincerities, the singleness and honesty of our hearts in these double times. To help forward with our prayers, the good of the Church, the great work which concerns Gods glory, his cause now on the wheelles, the great work of reformation.

3. Your conscience, that calls on you to discover your sincerity, and conscience is either a mans best friend, or worst enemy. If you would not have conscience shew it self an enemy at that time, when you desire it to appear your friend, then make use of the seasons to declare the sincerity of your hearts to God. And then will conscience bee thy friend in health, thy friend in sickness, thy friend in life, thy friend in death, when all other friends must leave thee. The testimony of *Hezekiah*s conscience to him when hee lay on his sick-bed, which gave in evidence of his sincerity, brought more comfort than all the World. *Lord, remember how I have walked before thee, &c.* Would you have conscience to give in the like testimony for you? then declare the sincerity of your hearts, when God calls you out. There is a story, the moral whereof is good; that a man who had three friends which hee loved well, and being sent for to the King, asked which of his friends would go with him, one tells him hee could not go, nor stir, another told him hee would go a little way with him, but could not go out with him, the third, hee tells him, hee will not only go with him, but answer all for him, bring him off. God is the King, the World, kindred, and conscience, are the three friends, the arrest, death, and the person sent for, the soul. The World, that will leave you, kindred bring you a little way, to the grave, there leave you, but it is a good conscience which carries a man thorough, and makes a man stand blameless before the tribunal. If you would have conscience bee your friend, then labour to discover sincerity now. A

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FOR HIS
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BY
SAMUEL BOLTON, D. D.
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EXODUS 15. 11.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the Gods! who is like thee, glorious in Holiness! fearful in Praises! -- Doing wonders!



When troubles are threatned, God doth charge us with two things, and undertakes to discharge us of all the rest.

1. The first thing in Gods charge is *Faith*, Psal. 55. 22. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*, The burden of fears, of cares, of troubles, There is the charge, and the discharge followes: *Hee shall sustain thee.*

2. The second thing God doth charge us withall is *Prayer*, Psal. 50. 15. *Call upon mee.* But if you will take the charge and the discharge together. See Phil. 4. 6: *Be careful for nothing.* There

is the discharge -- But in all things make your request known to God. There is the charge.

And there are two things which God doth charge us withall, when our fears are blown over, and they are

1. Thankfulness.
2. Obedience.

The former you may read, *Psal.* 50. 15.

The latter, *1 Sam.* 12. 24. And this hath been the practice of the Saints, when calamities and troubles hath been either felt or feared; they have betaken themselves to those weapons to incounter them with,

*Faith and
Prayer.*

You see in *Hesters* time. And when God hath bestowed deliverance, then they have betaken themselves to Praises. You see in the same story of *Esther*, the Primitive Christians had their Stationary-daies, their daies of Prayer, wherein they assembled themselves together for the removal of the Churches pressuress lying upon them.

And no doubt, but they had their Solemn Feasts, and times of Praises, when God had wrought his deliverances.

The want of Mercy sends us to Prayer, the injoyment of Mercy sends us to Praises.

But what need wee seek further for an instance? you see here it was the practise of *Moses*.

The former Chapter tells you of his Dangers and Fears: The Egyptians pursued him, *vers.* 8, 9, 16, Together with *Moses* behaviour and demeanour, in these straits, *vers.* 13, 14, 15.

Where first you see his Faith, *vers.* 13, 14. And the 15th. verse implies his Prayer. Though wee read of none expressed, yet there is one implied. The Lord said unto *Moses*, wherefore cryest thou unto mee? speak unto the Children of Israel, that they go forward. By which is implied, that *Moses* his spirit did mightily wrestle with God in Prayer, although wee read not of any words hee there uttered.

And in this Chapter you may read of his praises for that great deliverance which God had wrought for them. No sooner was hee come to shoar, but hee singeth forth the praises of God, both for their own deliverance, and the enemies destruction.

So that these words that I have read unto you, they are a part of a Psalm of Thanksgiving, for the glorious and wonderful deliverance of the Children of Israel from the host of Pharaoh.

The summe of all you shall see in the 9, 10, 11. verses, where you may read these three things,

1. Mans purposing.
2. Gods disposing.
3. The Churches retributions.

1. *Mans purposing, in vers. 9. which was bloody enough.*

1. The Enemy said, *I will pursue.*

2. *I will overtake.*

3. *I will divide the spoil.*

4. *My lust shall be satisfied upon them.*

5. *I will draw my sword.*

6. *My hand shall destroy them.* Here was a bloody purpose, and all was done in their thoughts.

2. Wee have God disposing in the next vers. *Then didst blow with thy wind: the sea covered them: and they sank as lead in the mighty waters.* And then

3. Here is *The Churches Retribution*, set down in a way of Admiration of God excellencies; *Who is like unto thee, O Lord among the Gods! Who is like unto thee, glorious in Holinesse! fearful in Praises!*
Doing wonders!

Here is the Church *Riding in Triumph*, in a majestick solemnity, admiring of God, and triumphing in him; as she doth still in all her songs of praises for Deliverances; See *Judg. 5.* and *1 Sam. 2.* at the beginning, and most elegantly in *Isa. 25. 9.* *Lo, this is our God: we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him, and wee will bee glad, and rejoyce in his salvation.*

Wee will hold you no longer in the Preface, that which I shall commend unto you, from the words, is this

Doct. *The Wonderful God, doth do wonderful things for his Church and people.*

Hee doth not only do wonders simply: but great wonders, *Psal. 136. 4.* nay, *mighty wonders, Dan. 4. 3.* Amazing, astonishing wonders, for his Church and people.

In the prosecution of this doctrin, wee will go through these five things. We will shew you,

1. *The truth of it, That God doth do wonders.*

2. *The ground and reason, why God doth such wonders;*

3. *What those wonders are, which God doth.*

4. *When is the time, that God doth these wonders.*

5. *Whether God will do a wonder for us.*

Quere.

1. For the first of these, *That God doth do great wonders for his Church*, even such things as are above our thoughts; above our hopes, above our expectations, above our reason to conceive, above our faith to believe.

The whole Scriptures are but the *Annals*; or the records of the wonders which God hath done for his Church and people. You can all tell me, what wonders God did for his people in *Egypt*. The *Psalmist* tells you so, *Psal. 78. 12.* *Marvellous things did hee for them, in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt. And*

Vehiculum,
Sepulchrum.

you know what wonders hee did for them at the Red-sea, when there was nothing but death before them, death behind them, they were surrounded with death. Yet then God unbared his arm, and caused the Red-sea to divide it self, which became a passage to the one, and a grave to the other.

And wonders hee did for them in the wilderness. Not a day without a wonder, Every day was the *Birth of a wonder*. Hee gave them bread from heaven: he gave them water out of the rock. Read the 78 Psalm at your leasure, and the 9. chap. of *Nehemiah*, and in them you shall see a little Chronicle of the great wonders, which God hath done for his Church and people.

But to the Doctrin, *That God doth do wonders for his Church and people.*

I God hath wonderfully disappointed great plots, and desperate counsels, and designs against them.

Wee will give you an instance of this in *Hamans* time. *Hamani* had a desperate plot for the ruine of the Church and people of God, you may read it in the 3d. of *Esther* 8, 9, 10. to the end. In brief, it was this: *To overthrow and put to death all the Jews, upon pretence, that they kept not the Kings laws.* Here was their plot.

The disappointment of it you shall read in the 6, 7, 8. Chapters. The means whereby this design was broken, was but small, and therefore the greater was the wonder, the more visible was the hand of God. *The breaking of the Kings sleep, was the breaking of this design*, as you read, *Esth. 6.* beginning -- *The King could not sleep well*, what then? Could hee not lye still in his bed? No, he must have a book, and that book, the book of *Chronicles*: and that Book must bee opened; where accidentally, (though surely guided by Providence) hee opens and reads that passage recorded concerning *Mordecai*, where was registred his faithfullnesse in discovering and disappointing of a murder intended against the King. Whereupon God set this act of faithfulness so close upon the Kings heart, that hee could not rest till *Mordecai* was rewarded for it. And this reward must be *Hamans* ruine, his advancement, *Hamans* abasement. And this was the rise of *Hamans* disappointment.

The like you have, *Dan. 6. 4. 5.* There was a great design the Nobles had against *Daniel*. They saw *Daniel* was faithfull to the King, and they could find no way to insnare him, unlesse it were in something that concerned the law of his God. And therein, if they could find any thing in his obedience to God, that might render him disobedient to the King, they should then have their desire of him.

And therefore their Plot was this, *To make a Decree*, that they ever should ask any Petition either of God, or man for the space of thirty dayes, save only of the King, he was to be thrown into the den of Lyons.

Well, the Plot took according to the Desire of their hearts: for notwithstanding this decree, *Daniel* made his Prayers and supplications;

lications to his God, three times a day, as you see in the 10, 11, verses.

Upon this they go and tell the King: *Hast not thou, O King, made a Decree, that none should ask any Petition of God or man, save of thee? &c.* Here is one Daniel of the Captivity, who regards not thee O King, nor the decree thou hast signed: But makes his Supplication three times a day, vers. 13.

And what was this now, but to render him to the King, factious, seditious, a Rebel, a Traytor, One who cared not for King, nor Law. Though indeed Daniel was a better subject than the best of them; though they would have rendered him rebellious to the King, because he was obedient to his God.

But mark the issue of it. God disappointed them in their design, and brought their own plot upon their own Pates. Daniel was preserved by the Lyons that should have destroy'd him, as they did afterward them. The like of the three Children.

I might go down to our days, The Powder-plot: Eighty-Eight and God knows how many since.

2 God hath wrought wonderfull deliverance for his Church. Deliverances wonderful, and the way he hath wrought them was,

1 Sometimes by small means. For weaknesse and strength is all one with God; as Asa confessed, when that Great Army came against him, 2 Chron. 14. 11. *It is all one with thee, to help with many or with few.* Infinite wisdom and power know no difference. As the Mariner turns about the greatest ship with a small rudder.

No means can bee so contemptible; but he can make it successful to his own purposes.

As the greatest means will bee no priviledge, without Gods concurrence: so the smallest means shall be no prejudice, if God will concur.

Wee read, God hath sometimes armed natural Causes, Sunne, Moon, Stars, Hail, Wind: All which, were wondrous against the enemies of the Church.

The Stars in their course were said to fight against Sifera. The Lord slew the enemies of Folsue with Hail, and the Amabites with the Sun shining upon the water.

And wee read in the Ecclesiastical History, that the Christians, being to fight against the Barbarians, were in a great distresse for water: And upon their Prayer, God sent them abundance of rain, to refresh their Army: But incountered their enemies with Thunder and fire from heaven. In remembrance of which, the Romans called the Christian Legion *Aquivalentes: Fulminatrix.* The thundering Legion.

And sometimes God hath armed other causes, putting strength into weak and contemptible means, for the deliverance of his Church. God hath oftentimes delivered his Church by

such

such instruments, as the enemies before would have looked upon with scorn, as upon cast and despicable Creatures.

As God hath weakned and infatuated them, hee hath intended to destroy: so hath hee strengthened and guided with a spirit of wisdom, such as hee hath intended for the deliverance of a Church.

You see *Cyrus* comparatively a weak Prince, yet God made him an instrument to overthrow the most strong and puissant people in the World, the *Babylonians*, and by him to deliver his Church.

Deborah a Woman, and yet God raised her up for the deliverance of his Church.

So you see God doth it by small means.

2. Sometimes God works the deliverance of his Church without means. And this is more wonderful.

When God looks about and sees there is no man, then doth his right hand bring salvation. When the Channel of Creature-helps is dry, when the stream of second causes doth not runne: Then doth God himself stand up for the defence and deliverance of his Church and People, and creates deliverance out of nothing.

What God doth by means, hee can do alone. What hee doth immediately, hee doth sometimes immediately from himself. The Angel slew an hundred fourescore and five thousand, 2 King. 19. 35. Wee read, when *Julian* went to war against the *Persians*, hee vowed to his Idol-Gods, that when hee returned, hee would give them a sacrifice of all the Christians in the Empire.

Here was now no means for the deliverance of the Church. But God undertaketh the work himself, smiting him from Heaven with an unknown blow, and by that delivered his Church.

The like also of *Maximius*, and of *Herod*, Act. 12. 23. Though there be weakness below, yet there is strength above: Though means be wanting, yet hee can create means, or hee can work without. God and Faith, work best alone.

3. Sometimes God works the deliverance of his Church by contrary means. And this is yet a more wonderful way.

God doth often work his works by Contraries, hee brings good out of evil, Life out of Death, &c. As the Physitian doth order poisons and destructive ingredients to physical, useful, and healthful purposes. So those things which in themselves are against us, God in singular wisdom and mercy, turns them for us. That which hath been used as the means of ruine, hath God often turned to the means of raising a Church and People.

This is like the opening of the blind mans eyes with Clay. One would think it should rather put out the eyes of a seeing man, than give sight to a blind man. But Christ, do undertake the work, though the means be never so contrary, it shall be effectual.

Thus

Thus you see that God doth often do wonders for the good of his Church and People,

2. *Quere.*

2. Wee come now to the second thing. The Grounds and Reasons.

1. The first is, *Because hee is a wonderful God.* Wonderful things befit a Wonderful God. His Name is Wonderful, *Isa. 9. 6.* And therefore his works are Wonderful. This is the inference, *Psal. 85. 10. Thou art great, and do'st wonderful things.* Every one delights to do actions futable to themselves, futable to their own greatness.

When Alexander met with a great difficulty, his spirit thus encounters it, *Fam periculum par animo Alexandri:* Now here is a danger, here is a difficulty fit for the spirit of Alexander to encounter withall: here is a work futable for Alexander to do. Great enterprises, great difficulties, great things befit Great spirits. *Magnos magna decet.* And wonderful things befit a wonderful God.

And upon this ground Gods reliefs come not in, until cases are desperate, because then hee may discover his great Power. And such deliverances are most futable to the great God. Hee could as well have saved *Lazarus* from sickness, as have raised him from the grave: but hee suffers him to dye, hee buried, and lye three days in the grave, that hee might magnifie his power, in the raising of him again. Hee lets the difficulty go beyond the help of man, that you might the better know what the Power of God is.

2. The second Reason. God doth wonderful things for his people, to get himself a wonderful Name, that God might be known in the World.

Therefore did God execute such fearful Judgements on *Pharaoh*, and wrought so great deliverances for his people; that hee might get himself a Name, and publish himself to the World, *Isa. 63. 12.*

Special cures win more glory to the Physitian, than a thousand ordinary cures: so special victories win more honour to a General, than a thousand ordinary skirmishes: so here, special deliverances to God.

If God should only walk in the ordinary wayes of his Providence in the World, his glory would not be so much seen and advanced: And therefore God doth often step out of his ordinary paths of Providence, and goes in *Extraordinaries*, that hee might discover his Glory and Power, and advance his own Name.

This know, that it is Gods great design in the World, to advance his own Name, and make it glorious to the ends of the Earth. This is one way God doth it by: even doing wonderful things for
his

his Church. Hereby God wins a great deal of honour and praise from the Saints; and dread and terror from the wicked, as the Scriptures speak.

You know how terrible was the Name of the God of Israel to all the Earth, by those great wonders God had done for Israel in Egypt.

And therefore this was the argument which David used, why God should destroy such as were his enemies, and work deliverances for such as were his people; *That men might know, that thou, whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the Earth*, Psal. 83. 18.

Great Mercies and wonderful deliverances, publish and set forth God, when smaller cannot do it.

Great Deliverances publish great Power; great Mercy, great Wisdom, and great Truth. God is lost in smaller deliverances; but visible in greater. They who are unwilling to acknowledge God in lesser, are forced to acknowledge him in greater deliverances, and to say with them, who without doubt were loath enough to acknowledge it, *Digitus Dei est hic, The finger of God is here.*

None, but a God could have disappointed such Counsels.

None, but a God could have discovered such Plots.

None, but a God could have removed such Evils.

None, but a God could have wrought such Deliverances.

3. The third Reason, why God doth wonderful things for his Church, is, *as to get, so to uphold his great Name.*

You have an excellent place for this in *Deut. 32. 27.* God was highly displeased with Israel, for their provocations of him; and hee threatened to destroy them: yet after all this, hee saith, --- *I said, I would scatter them into corners, and would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy: lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, our high hand, and not the Lord, hath done all this.*

The like you have in *2 King. 18. 35.* *Who are there among the Gods of the Countries, that can deliver out of my hand? so hee vaunted, and God suffered him to soare so high, that hee might have the greater praise, and his Glory bee higher advanced by the greater downfall of such a Lucifer.*

And this was the Argument which Moses urged God withal, when hee threatened to destroy the Children of Israel, *Numb. 14. 15.* *Now if thou kill this people, then the Nations which have heard the fame of thee, will speak, saying: Because the Lord was not able to bring this People into the Land, which hee swore unto them, therefore hath hee slain them in the Wilderness.* As if hee had said, --- *Thou hast gotten thy self a Name, by the mighty wonders, which thou hast done for thy people: but if thou shouldest leave now, and do no more, thou wouldest lose thy glory, which thou hast gotten,*

ten, and the Nations. would bee ready to charge thee with weak-
ness and impotency, that thou wast not able to do what thou
hast promised, and purposed to do for thy People.

The like you have in *Deut. 9. 28.* And in *Exod. 32. 10.* And
the same Argument you have in *Jos. 8. 9.* When God went not
forth with the armies of Israel, but suffered them to bee smitten
by their enemies. O Lord, (saith *Joshua*) what shall I say when Is-
rael turn their backs upon their enemies? If it bee thus, what will be-
come of thy great Name!

Arguing by this, that there was a necessity for God to do great
things for his People, still to uphold that great Name hee had gotten,
which otherwise would fall to the ground, *Psal. 79. 9.* Help us
for the glory of thy Name; and deliver us for thy Names sake.

And an excellent place you have for this, in *Isa. 48. 9, 10, 11.*
For my Names sake will I defer my wrath, and for my Praise will I re-
strain it from thee, that I cut thee not off.

4. *Reas.* God doth wonderful things for his People, that hee might
inherit wonderful praises from his People. Therefore doth God
work wonderful deliverances for his Church, that his Church might
return suitable praises to God again. *Psal. 111. 4.* Hee hath done
his wonderful works, to bee remembered. As if hee had said, it was
for this end, that God did those wonderful works, wrought those
great deliverances, that they might bee remembered, that they might
bee kept upon the imagination of the thoughts of the heart for
ever. As in *1 Chron. 29. 18.* That wee might bee so many living
Monuments of thankfulness, so many Trumpets to sound forth the
praise of his Greatness and Goodness, from Generation to Genera-
tion. And hee that forgets Thankfulness, forgets the end of Gods
bestowing of Mercy, and robs himself of the fruit and effect of the
present Mercy, and hinders himself of future.

5. *Reas.* God doth wonderful things for his Church, to add tor-
ture to the Devil, and his Children.

Gods mercies and deliverances to the Saints, must needs in-
rage the Devil, and wicked men.

When *Haman* had prevailed so far as to get a bloody decree
against the Jews, hee joyed exceedingly, as one that promised to
himself the utter ruine of them all. Now God stepping in, and sud-
den, and shewing a wonder to disappoint him in his design, no man
can conceive, much less express how much this added to *Hamans*
torture and vexation. Hee gouth home, and vexeth himself, and vex-
eth in his bed, and could have no rest.

Achitophel was so tortured, that his design did not take, that hee
was impatient of his life. Hee could not ease himself, but by de-
stroying himself.

The like you have of *Balaam*. God hath his wayes, to make
wicked men gnash their teeth before they come to Hell, and this is
one way, to put them in a kinde of hope of having their will upon

the godly, as they had in the verse before the Text, *I will pursue, I will destroy, I will divide the spoil.* And then on a sudden overturning all, blowing upon their projects, bringing all their enterprises to nought: *Oh! that doth make them vex, and torture their own souls.*

Reason, *God doth wonderful things for his Church and People. That both our selves and the Generations to come might be quickned and stirred up to trust in him, obey him.*

1. That wee our selves might bee quickned to trust in him. And this you see was the fruit of that great deliverance in the text, *Exod. 14. 30. And Israel saw that great work, which the Lord had done upon the Egyptians: And the People feared the Lord, and believed the Lord.*

And this use David made. *That God that hath delivered mee from the Lyon and the Bear, hee will also deliver mee from this uncircumcised Philistine:* So *Psal. 63. 7. Because thou hast been my helper, therefore under the shadow of thy wings I will rejoyce,* That is, because thou hast been my Helpe: I have had experience of thy goodnesse to me in such and such straits. Therefore under the shadow of thy wings I will rejoyce. Not onely, *Trust in thee, but Rejoyce,* as being assured thou wilt help me in time to come.

Men unmindful of former experiences, are still to seek in every fresh difficulty.

Where Experiences are the Premises,
Divine Assurance may be the Conclusion.

David was a man of many choice experiences of Gods goodnesse to him; and hee was a man that was choice of them: hee laid them up, and made use of them at every need. Hee did not only make use of the Experiences themselves, but of every thing, that came in to it, or was a Trophie of it.

It is a passage not to bee neglected, that when hee was forced to fly from Saul, comming to Ahimelech the Priest, hee desired a weapon of him, for his defence and safeguard. Hee told him, that there was none, save onely *The Sword of Goliath*, whom hee had slain, and David said, *there is none like that, give it mee,* *1 Sam. 31. 3.* This was a Trophie of Gods goodnesse to him: It was an Emblem of a former Experience of Gods love to him: And there was no better weapon for his defence, than such a one, as was both an experience and a weapon. In carrying this, hee carried an Experience with him, which might Comfort him, and encourage him too.

1 Cor. 1. 10. Saith the Apostle: *hee hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: In whom we trust he will yet deliver us.*

Thus from the former Experiences of Gods goodnesse to him, hee makes out an argument of future deliverances.

And, if we were but thus wise, to treasure up former Experiences, the former parts of our lives would come in to help the last,

ter: And the longer wee live; the richer in faith we should be. Wee ought indeed to trust God, though wee had never Tried him: but, when hee helps our faith by former Experiences, this should strengthen our Confidence, and make us to go unto God; as unto a Tried friend.

If wee were well read in the History of our Lives, wee might have a Bible of our own, drawn out of the Experiences of Gods dealings with us, and wee should be able to say, in any difficulty and distresse, I dare trust God in this difficulty; I dare adventure on him, in this present distresse: I have tried him, and found him true; Hee never failed mee. And because hee hath been my help, therefore under the shadow of his wings will I rejoyce. This is the first part of this Reason, God doth wonders, to quicken and incourage his Church and People, to trust in him and obey him.

2. God doth it, that the very generations to come might be incouraged to trust in the same God, in the like distresses.

This use the Church made of Former Experiences, Psal. 22. 4, 5. Our Fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them: they cryed unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. And from hence the Church gathers an argument, that that God; that had delivered others, would also deliver them.

The like you have, Isa. 51. 9, 11. Awake, awake, Put on strength, O arm of the Lord: Awake, as in the Ancient days, in the Generations of old: Are not thou hee, that wounded the Dragon, who dried up the Sea, and made the depths a way for the ransomed to pass over? As if he had said, All those Former Experiences of thy Gracious dealings, and wonderfull deliverances of thy Church, they are as so many incouragements to us, to beleeve thy goodnesse. And therefore the Psalmist tells us, Psal. 9. 10. They that know thy name, will trust in thee. -- And hee gives the reason: For thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek thee. -- Hee doth not say, Thou Lord wilt not, but, thou Lord hast not. Gods hath not, is his will-not too.

The Argument were not good, would not hold in men. They Have not, therefore they Will not; Men may change, men may alter; but. Either they may repent of former curtesies, or they may resolve to do no more. Men, wee see, shut their hands, because they Have opened them; and their former curtesies are reasons of future denials.

But the argument is good here. Hee hath not: therefore hee will not forsake his people. Hee will be gracious, because hee hath been gracious. Gods former dealings towards his Church and people, do but publish to the world, and inform us, what his future behaviour shall bee to his Church and people. Hee Hath not, therefore he will not.

God blames the Israelites, because hee had done so great

works for them, *And yet they beleaved not.*

7. *Real.* God will do wonderfull things for his Church, because His love and ingagements do move him unto it.

There are four loving ingagements of God, which move him to do wonderful things for his Church,

1. *They are his.*

2. *He hath promised.*

3. *His people trust in him.*

4. *They seek unto him.*

1. God is ingaged to do wonderful things for us, *Because wee are his.* We are his people, hee is our God: wee are his Spouse, hee our husband: wee are his children, hee our father: wee his Members, hee our head: wee are his portion, his inheritance, &c.

And this is a great ingagement for God to do great things for us; what will not a loving father do for his child? what will not a loving Husband do for his wife? &c. wee stand in the same relations with God.

He thought nothing too great to suffer for us. Hee suffered great things, and hee suffered cheerfully: hee was in pain till the hour came. And do you think hee will think any thing too much to do for you?

God doth what ever is done in the world. And there is nothing that he doth, that I may say his heart is more in, than he doth with most Complacency and delight, than those things he doth for his Church and People. His whole heart is in them, and therefore doth them cheerfully, and doth them fully. As you know, whatever your heart is in, that you do willingly, that you do thoroughly, &c.

Indeed, there was Nothing to ingage him, To make us his People, before hee made us his People, as Moses saith, God chose you, not because of thy righteousness, the uprightness of thy heart, for thou art a stiff-necked People. But because the Lord Loved you, &c.

But there is something to ingage him, To do for us now, hee hath made us his People, because wee are his People, this is that, that Samuel did comfort the Israelites withall, 1 Sam. 12. 22. The Lord will not forsake his people, for his great Names sake, And why? what is the reason? what is the ingagement? why saith hee, *Because he hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.*

2. A second loving ingagement, which causeth God to do wonders for his People is, because he hath ingaged himself to us, by many great and precious Promises. Gods Promises are ingagements upon him. God hath made himself our Debter, Not by receiving any thing from us, but by promising all things to us. God hath made many precious promises to us.

His Promises of Preservation, Isa. 33. 16. Hee shall dwell on high: his

Fidelis Domi-
nus, qui se no-
bis tecit debi-
torem non ali-
quid a nobis
accipiendo sed
omnia nobis
promittendo
Aug.

his place of defence shall bee the munition of Rocks, bread shall bee given to him, his waters shall bee sure,

A Promise, than which I know none more full in the Book of God, wherein all Objections, that a fearful heart might raise, are answered and taken away. Let us view it over.

1. Hee shall dwell on high. If hee were among his enemies, hee might bee in danger: But hee shall dwell on high, say, on heights, as the Word is: many ascents, many Heights, above the reach of danger, out of Gun-shot.

2. But suppose they could raise up Mountains, and come as high as hee, yet they shall not hurt him. Hee is in a place of defence.

3. But what then? His defence is not so strong, but it may bee broken thorough. No faith the Text, that is impossible, for his place of defence shall bee the Munitions of Rocks, many Rocks, and many Munitions of Rocks (and therefore impregnable.) to guard him.

4. Why? but hee may bee Starved out, his supply will not alway last. There is no plowing and sowing upon Rocks, hee may bee famished out. No faith the Text, Bread shall bee given him, Hee shall bee provided for.

5. But what shall wee do for Water? There is no Water to be had out of Rocks. You see it was that which posed the Faith of Moses: to fetch Water out of a Rock. But faith the Text, hee shall have Water too.

6. Yea but his Water may be spent, It will not alway last. No faith the Text, His Water shall be sure, never failing Waters, sure Waters.

Again, in the same Chapter, vers. 21. The Lord will bee to us as a place of broad Rivers and streams, wherein shall go on Gallies with Oares, and shall gallant ship pass thereby. Shewing the defence God would bee to his People. Hee will bee a Stream, nay a River between us and our enemies.

And a broad River, a River that cannot bee passed over. Why but they may use Oares. No faith the Lord, Hee will bee a River, wherein on Gally with Oares shall pass.

But a Ship may. No, nor gallant ship shall pass thereby, for the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our King, the Lord is our King, hee will save us. But what if any ship should attempt? You shall see, vers. 23. God will overthrow them. Thy tacklings are loosed, they could not well strengthen their Masts, they could not spread the sails.

And as hee hath made promises of Preservation from his enemies, hee hath made promises of Deliverance out of trouble. Psal. 34. 19. Many are the troubles of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. So Psal. 30. 15. Call upon mee in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee. So Psal. 91. 15. I will bee with him in trouble, and will deliver him. So Psal. 54. 17. The weapon formed against thee shall prosper. And an excellent promise we have, Isa. 43. 3, 4. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. God speaks

speaks here as the Lord and Possessor of the whole Earth, *Egypt* was his, and *Ethiopia* was his, and both these hee gave for to redeem his Church.

The Church was in bondage and captivity, you know, in *Egypt*. And God gave *Egypt* for her ransome. And how? because shee could not bee ransomed and delivered without the loss of *Egypt*. Therefore God gave *Egypt* for her: That is, hee would rather lose all the Land of *Egypt*, than his people should not bee ransomed: hee would sink the whole Kingdome of *Egypt*, if it stood betwixt his People and Deliverance. And so it follows in the 4. vers. *I have loved thee, therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.* As if hee had said. I love thee, thou art more dear to mee than all the World, and I do not stick to give the lives of thousands to uphold thine. Multitudes shall bee destroyed, rather than thou shalt not bee preserved. *I love thee, and therefore I will give men for thee.*

Thus you see God is engaged to do wonderful things for his Church, because of his Promise.

That love which hath moved him to make these precious promises to us, will never give him rest, till it hath caused him to make good those promises which hee hath made.

3. A third loving Engagement, which causes God to do wonders for his People is, because they trust in him. A Trust is a kinde of Engagement upon a man, although hee had made no promise. A man will not deceive another, who reposeseth his whole trust in him, though hee were not engaged by Promise. There is a kinde of Engagement in Trust it self: And shall wee then think that God will, when hee hath made so many precious promises to us? This were the greatest deceit in the World, a soules deceit. If God should call us off from all other succours, from other shelters, and tell us, that if wee will trust in him, hee will bee our succour, our security. And should God fail the soule, this were an undoing-deceit, the greatest deceit in the World.

No, my Brethren, there was never man who laid up his confidence in God, but hee found God to bee that to him, which hee expected.

Faith engageth all the Power, all the Wisdome, all the Mercy, and Truth of God to help us. And if the Power, Wisdome, &c. of God can do wonders for thee: God will then do wonders for thee, if thou beleeve in him. Beleeve (saith Christ) and thou shalt see the wondrous works of God.

4. A fourth Engagement, which causeth God to do wonders for his People is, because they seek him. Hee doth not say to the seed of Jacob, seek mee in vain. Hee hath filed himself. The God hearing prayers, and bids us call upon him in the day of trouble, and hee will hear. The Prayers of Gods People, they are as so many Engagements upon God, to move him to do for them.

Faith

Faith and Prayer will set All-God a work. It will set the Power, Wisdom, Mercy of God a work, for you. Faith and Prayer will remove Mountains. Nothing shall bee too hard for that people to do, whose hearts and spirits God holds up to beleeve, and to pray. Bee it to thee, even as thou wilt.

Luther having been in his study, and earnest with the Lord about the business of the Church, receiving a gracious answer, hee comes down and cryes, Wee have overcome, the day is ours. And so it fell out, faith the story: For the Church prevailed.

There is a kinde of Omnipotency in Faith and Prayer, because these two set the Omnipotent God, and the Omnipotency of the Power of the Omnipotent God, to work for us.

And I beleeve, The great work of Reformation hath gone so slowly forward, because Gods People are not so strongly carried on in seeking.

3 The third thing wee have to do, is to shew you

3. *Quere.*

What are those wonders which God doth for his Church and People?

1 God doth wonders for the souls of his People.

2 God doth wonders for the body, and outward man.

1 Gods Wonders to the soul.

1 For the soul. And wee will give you a glance of these. The first Wonder, and indeed the Wonder of Wonders, which God hath done for his Church and People is,

1 The giving of Christ for us, and to us.

1 Wonder for the soul.

All wonders are swallowed up in this wonder. Nothing is wonderful, if compared to this. God manifested in the flesh. Hence the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3. 16. Great is the mystery of Godliness. God manifested in the flesh. That such greatness, and such meanness; such finiteness, and such infiniteness; such riches, and such poverty; such strength, and such weakness; Tantus Deus, tantillus Homo; So great a God, and so meane a Man, all in one: Here is a Wonder.

There is four great Wonders conspicuous in this.

1 Here is a Wonder of Humility, which will appear, if you consider,

1 Of Humility.

1 Who hee was.

2 What hee became.

1 Who hee was. Hee was the Son of God, The express Image of his Fathers person, One equal with God, and thought it no robbery to bee equal with God, hee was God-blessed for ever. As the Apostle saies him.

2 What hee became. Hee took not upon him the Nature of Angels; which yet had been a greater descent, than if all the Angels in Heaven had been turned into Worms. But hee took not the Nature of Angels, but hee took upon him the Nature of Man, and that not at the best, but of Man fallen, subject to infirmities, Penal,

not

not Culpable : General, not particular.

And what a wonder of Humility was this ? There is not the meanest Angel in heaven, but would have thought it a wrong above amends, to have been so low abased. Here was a wonder of Humility, *Factor terra, factus in terra*. The maker of the earth, to bee made of earth.

2. Here was a wonder of wisdom.

That God should find out such a way to recover us, when we were lost : If all the united Consultations of men and Angells had been laid together, they could never have found out a way to Reconcile Gods mercy in the salvation of man, and yet his Justice in the damnation of sin.

If God should have helped us thus farre. You are miserable Creatures: But I am a merciful God. The demands of my justice I must not deny: neither will I deny the intreaties of my mercy. Find mee then but one, that can satisfy my justice, and I will shew my mercy to you. Ah ! where should wee have found one, who was strong enough to bear sinne, and to satisfy the wrath of God for us ! No, it was his own wisdom, that found out the way. Here was a wonder of wisdom, which wee adore and admire.

3. Here was a wonder of Love.

An Heighth, a depth, a length, a breadth, a Love beyond all dimensions. Hence said to bee a Love passing knowledge, a Love that may bee apprehended by faith, not comprehended by reason, it was an infinite love. And this is more than if wee could gather all the bowels of the Creation together. Hence saith Christ, who knew the greatnesse of it, *John 3. 16. i.e. So God loved the world, so infinitely, so incomprehensibly, that hee gave his only begotten Son, that, whosoever beleeveeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

4. Here was a wonder of mercy, which will bee more conspicuous if we consider,

1. The Person.

2. The Time.

1. The Person, who undertook this; It was the second Person in the glorious Trinity: the Person against whom the first Sinne was in some special respect committed. Hee is the wisdom of the father, and called wisdom, *Prov. 8*. And this sinne was an affectation of wisdom, to bee like to God. As the falling-sin is now the sinne against the Third Person, Sinne against the Holy Ghost: so the sin which did occasion the fall, was in some special respects against the second Person. And therefore the greater is the wonder of mercy, That he, against whom the first sinne was so committed, should undertake the expiation of

2. Consider the time, when hee took our nature. And that was when

when wee were brought to a desperate losse: when it was made evident that nothing else could help us, *Heb. 10. 6, 7. Sacrifice and burnt-offerings, thou wouldst not have.* Then said I, *Loe, I come.* When Legal washings were declared unable to pacify God, or to work our peace; Then Christ comes into the world. Christ came not into the world till it was made Evident, That without him, God could not be satisfied, nor man bee saved. And this is the first Wonder, The sending of Christ, in whom all is wonderfull. His *Incarnation, the Hypostatical union of two natures in one Person: His Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Session, Intercession:* They are a chain of holy wonders. Hence, *Isa. 9. 6. Christ is called wonderful: because all in Christ is wonderfull.*

1 He is wonderfull in his person and natures: God-man, and mortall-immortall, finite and infinite, so great, and yet so mean: so rich and yet so poor. Here is a wonder.

2 Hee is wonderfull in his Offices. A King, Priest, and Prophet.

3 Hee is wonderfull in his government.

That hee should bring us to life, by death, to glory by misery; to honor by shame; *All wonders:* This is the first wonder, and the root of all the rest.

2 Another wonder God doth for the souls of his People, is,

1 The work of Conversion and regeneration, that a man should partake of another begetting, of another birth, of another nature, than others have in the world: Nay, than hee himself had. This is a wonder. That a man should bee the same, and not the same. The same man for body, yet as different in qualities, as if another soul did dwell in the same body. That hee should live by another life; bee fed by other food, refreshed by other comforts, than others are: Here is a wonder, that of a *Lyon* should become a *Lamb*; of a *Wolf*, a *sheep*; of a *Saul*, a *Paul*; a *Persecutor*, become a *Preacher*. Here is a wonder.

The second wonder to the soul.
1 In Conversion

And the greater is the wonder, if you look upon the weaknesse and contemptiblenesse of the means, God works this by. The ministry of a weak man.

It had been no great wonder, if the Walls of *Jericho* had fallen down by the battery of a Cannon. But this made it the wonder, that the blast of Rams-horns should bring down the walls of *Jericho*. And this is that, which makes this work more wonderfull, that by such weak and Contemptible means and men, in the eyes of carnal men, this great work should be effected.

When a man shall come to the Church, with full tide and stream of lust, lifting up his head, puffing at God, glorying in his sin and shame, Nay perhaps, Come with purpose to contemn, to scorn the Dispenser. And to see this man return home, by the ministry of a weak man, wounded, slain, laid upon his back, crying out with the Publican; God bee merciful to mee a sinner: or with *Paul*;

Lord, what wilt thou have mee to do: I am willing to do any thing, to suffer any thing, &c. Here is a wonder; well may wee say in the voice of the Prophet, *What ails thee, thou Jordan, that thou art driven back! Thou sea, that thou fleddest!*

And as the birth of a Christian, so

2 In the life.

2. The life of a Christian in grace, is wonderful. It is a mysterious life: A life hid from the world: for

1. *The seat of this life is hid and secret.*

2. *The principle and spring of this life is secret and mysterious.*

3. *The Nourishment mysterious.*

4. *The conveyance of nourishment.*

5. *The comforts of this life.* All wonders. Nothing in Grace, but wonders.

3 In Perseverance.

3 *When God shall hold up a mans heart to fear him, to seek him, to believe in him, in times of darknesse, and temptations.* Here is a wonder.

All the workings of Faith are wonders: but especially in temptations, and Desertions.

1 That a man by Faith should conquer a troop of fears, silence an Army of doubts, answer a throng of disputes, and carnal reasonings, overcome all the powers of darknesse, to chase ten thousands Devils before him, which all the power of earth cannot do. Here is a wonder.

2 That a man by Faith should hold up his head, under the burden and guilt of many thousand sins, the lest of which would sink the soul, if Faith did not cast all this upon the Lord.

3 *That a man by faith, should bee a rock in the midst of a storm, and stand immoveable when the winds blow, and the billows rage, when heaven and earth seem to come together, as you see David did, Psal. 27. 1, 2, 3. and Psal. 46. 1, 2, 3. I will not fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains bee hurled in to the midst of the Sea.*

4 *When God shall keep alive a little spark of grace in the midst of a sea of corruptions, hold up his own work in the mids of all Counter-workings, and oppositions of finne and Satan.* Here is a wonder.

5. *When God shall make a man willing to sacrifice his goods, liberty, life, rather than to wound his Conscience, and offend his God.* This is a wonder, which, without the power of God, could not bee wrought.

6. *When God shall bear up the spirits of the Saints with joy and comfort, in the absence of all created comforts, as you see, Hab. 3. 17. Although the fig-tree shall not blossome, nor shall fruit bee in the vine, &c: yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

Nay, in the presence of all created discomforts, to stand up, and rejoyce under the frowns, menaces, scorn, scourges, prisons, persecutions

tions of men, imbrace the stake, kiss the chains, smile on the terrors of death, rejoyce with Stephen under a shower of stones. Here are Wonders.

7 When God doth turn all the afflictions, nay, all the sins of his Church and People, to the good of his People, to humble them more, cast them out of themselves, cast them upon the hold of Faith, the exercise of Prayer; make them more watchful, more careful, more exact. Here's a wonder.

Secondly, God works wonders for the body; for the outward condition of the Church; for the good of his people, in regard of the outward map.

2 Gods Wonders for the Body.

1 God doth often restrain the wickedness and malice of men against his Church; that though they bee never so full of Hell and fury, yet they shall not bee able to vent it, against the Church and People of God. Thus you see it was with *Rabshakeh*, when hee came with purpose to destroy *Jerusalem*; yet God put his hook into his nose, and his bridle into his lips. Hee restrained him, as you see in 2 *King.* 19. 28, 32, 33. And this made *David* to say, when the *Princes* took counsel together, to take away his life, *My times are in thy hands*, *Psal.* 31. 15. Though they bee never so full of malice, their designs bee never so bloody, yet *my times are in thy hands; they shall not bee able to hurt mee*: though they consulted, yet hee knew they could not act: God could restrain them.

God hath the Devil, much more wicked men, in a chain; and they cannot go a jot further than hee gives them chain; and that shall bee no further than for his own Glory, and the good of his Church, as hee tells us, *Psal.* 76. 10. *Surely the wrath of man shall turn to thy Praise, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*

Though wicked men bee never so full of wrath and fury against the Church, yet they shall vent no more than what shall turn to the Glory of God, nay, the Praise of God; so much as his People shall have cause to praise him for. *The remainder of wrath, (though never so full) hee shall restrain.* They shall burst before they shall vent any of it, to the hurt of his People. And this is a great wonder. His setting bounds to the fury of men, as hee doth to the raging of the Sea. *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further: restraining the malice of men against the Church, is as great a wonder, as to see a Milstone hang in the Air, and not fall down.*

2 God doth often calm, and still the raging fury of wicked men against his Church and People. Hee doth not only bound them, but still them.

And thus you see it was with *Esau*. Hee came forth with rage, and bloody-purposes against *Jacob*, to bee revenged on him for all. But you see how God calmed him. In stead of killing him; hee falls upon his neck, and kisses him. It was God that did it. And therefore it is said, *Gen.* 33. 10. *That Jacob saw the face of Esau, as the face of God.* It was not *Esau*, but God that hee saw

in *Esaus* face. Hee saw God appearing in the wonderful changing; and calming of his spirit, who came with such fury against him. And this was the fruit of his wrestling and praying the night before.

3. *V*hen God doth carry on great purposes with weak and contemptible Power: makes weak means successful to do great purposes and effects. This is a wonder, and a wonder God often doth; as you see in *Asa*, 2 Chron. 14. 11. *It is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no Power.* As the Mariner can turn about the greatest ship with the smallest Rudder: So God, who ever sits at the Helm, and steeres and governs all, can bring about his own purposes by weakest means.

As hee brought *Jeremy* out of the dungeon with old rotten rags; good for nothing: So hee makes use of such means in straits, for the deliverance of his Church, as the enemies thereof do look upon with scorn, as upon cast and despicable Creatures.

As God doth weaken and intuate them, hee intends not to prosper; so hee strengthens and guides with a spirit of wisdom, those hee intends for the deliverance of his Church. You see this in *Deborah*, in *Cyrus*, who though hee were a weak Prince, yet God made him an instrument for the overthrow of the most strong and puissant people in the World.

4 *When hee makes the Afflictions and persecutions of his Church, a means of growth and increase of his Church.*

As it was said of the *Israelites*, *Exod. 1. 12. The more they were afflicted, the more they grew:* so hath God still done for his Church. The primitive times tell us of thousands, who were brought in, not by Sermons, but by the sufferings of the Saints. The blood of those Martyrs being the seed of the Church.

And *Julian* knew this so well, that hee left off to persecute the Church, as his Predecessors had done. *Non ex misericordia, sed ex invidia;* not out of mercy, but envy, saith the Historian, because hee saw, *The more they were afflicted, the more they grew: The more they were oppressed, the more they increased:* And therefore hee left off that course. But the Church lost more by Sun-shine, than by Storms; more by Peace, than by Troubles; by Smiles, than by Frowns.

5 *V*hen God shall bring about the Peace of his People, by the trouble of his People; their healing, by their woundings; their comforts by their fears. When God shall work his work by contraries; bring joy out of sorrow, life out of death, create comfort out of discomforts: This is a wonder, and a wonder which God hath frequently shewed for the good of his Church.

How often hath God made the lusts of men, even the malice and rage of his enemies, to bee a means for the good of his Church and People: making those things, which in their own nature were for the ruine, a means for the raising of his Church and People.

The

The stories of *Pharaoh*, of *Haman*, and others, afford you plentiful proof of it. Thus, out of the *Eater*, comes *salvage*: out of those things *destructive* in themselves, *comfort* and *deliverance*. This is to turn poison into food, evil into good. As God doth turn the evil of sin, so much more the evil of trouble, to the good of his Church. Hee makes all troubles subservient to deliverance, as pangs and throws are to the birth.

As it was in the waters of *Bethesda*: the waters were troubled before the diseased were healed; God made the trouble of the water subservient to the cure in the water: So hee often makes the troubles of his People, subservient to the growth and increafe of his People.

As the *Whale* which swallowed up *Jonah*, hee made a means to bring him to the shoar: So that trouble which wee think will swallow us up, God makes to advance their peace here, till hee set them on the shoar of eternity.

Wee our selves have had the experience of it. But *this is the Lords doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes.*

6 *When there are nothing but thoughts and preparations for war and destruction: And God shall please to compose our differences, heal our breaches, change the sad face of things, beat our swords into Plow-shares, and our spears into Pruning-hooks. This is a wonder.*

And this is a wonder which God can do, a wonder which hee hath done; a wonder which wee have had experience of; and such an one as wee are now in expectations of, which God of his merry grant.

It will bee more *destructive* to our enemies than our wars. In the mean time, there must bee our prayers and indeavours for it.

4. *Quere.*

4 *When is the time which God takes to do these wonders for his Church?*

1 *When God shall get himself most glory of the enemies of his Church and People: Then is the time God takes to do wonders.*

If God had disappointed *Haman*, at the beginning of his design, hee might thereby have delivered his Church: but hee had not then gotten so much glory out of him, and therefore hee suffers him to go on with his design, and bring it up to ripeness, that now it is ready to bee put in execution: and then God stepping in in a wonderful and unexpected way, hee got himself a great deal of glory upon him.

Therefore doth God oftentimes stay till the enemies bee ripe, till they have digged graves to bury themselves in, twisted cords to binde themselves withall: that thereby their confusion might be greater, and Gods glory more visible.

2 *When God shall get most praise from his own people. God is ve-*

ry desirous of the praises of his Saints. As hee doth *Bathe* himself in their tears, so hee doth delight himself in their joyes. Hee loves to hear their Praises, as well as their Prayers.

And you know the greater the Straits out of which God doth help and deliver, the more are the hearts of the Saints enlarged with praises to him. And therefore God doth take such a time for the declaration of his deliverances, as thereby the hearts of his People may bee mightily enlarged and affected with the mercy.

3 *When God can do the Church most good, and work the compleatest deliverance for them: Then is the time for God to do wonders for his Church.*

You see this in the story of *Pharaoh*. God could have wrought a deliverance for them, had hee but unwheel'd his Charets, as soon as hee came out of *Egypt*. But it had not then been so compleat a deliverance as they afterward had.

Though God had delivered them from that present trouble, yet their enemies had been alive, and they should have heard of them again. And therefore God he lets them go on, and follow them unto, nay into the Red-sea, and then to work a compleat deliverance for them; he shews a wonder upon them.

The like you have, *Mich. 4. 11, 12, 13.* *Many Nations are gathered together against thee, who say, let her bee defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, nor understand they his Counsell: for hee shall gather them as sheaves into the floor. Arise and thresh, O Daughter of Zion: for I will make thy horns iron, and thy hoofs brasse, and thou shalt break in peeces, many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.*

Where observe, God suffers Nations, and many Nations to gather themselves together against *Zion*. And why did God do so? certainly they thought they should have the day of *Zion*: and so they say, *Let her bee defiled, let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, they understand not the Counsell of God.* For God suffers them to gather themselves together, but for this end, For the compleater ruine of the enemys, and by that, for the compleater deliverance of the Church. So it follows, *They know not the thoughts of the Lord: for he shall gather them.* They gather themselves together; and yet saith the Text, *God gathers them.* They gathered themselves to ruine the Church: and God gathers them, to ruine themselves. *Hee shall gather them as sheaves into the floor,* and the fuller the load, the more welcome to the Husbandman. And then *Arise and thresh.*

4. A fourth time, wherein God doth wonderful things for his Church; is,

When the enemies of the Church are carried on with most rage, and promise themselves most success against the Church and people of God.

You

You see that in the verses before the Text, 9, 10. when the enemy said in his heart, *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall be satisfied on them, I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.* -- Here they express their fury and rage, and promise themselves good success in all.

And this was the time for God to do Wonders, you see in the next vers. *Thou didst blow with thy wind, the Sea covered them, they sank as lead in the mighty waters.*

It was so in the Powder-Plot: A Plot never to be forgotten. When they had intended to have blown up, King, People, Nobles, Commons, Senators, Senate, Laws, and Law-makers; nay, three kingdoms at a blast: They could have buried all in one grave, and consumed all in one Bonfire. Here was their rage, their fury. And did they not also promise to themselves as good success in their way? Had they not then in their purposes disposed of Crown and kingdom, and all the Chief Offices, and Revenues in the Land? -- And now was the time for God to shew a wonder for the deliverance of his Church, which you know he did. *A wonder of wisdom in the discovery of the Plot, and a wonder of mercy, in disappointing of it.*

5. When Gods People are brought low, when all humane helps fail, when the Arm of flesh is weak, when the stream of second Causes is dry. Then is Gods time to shew a wonder for their relief; when wee cannot be releev'd without a wonder, then God works wonders for our relief.

You see this Deut. 32. 35, 36. *The Lord shall judge his People, and repent himself concerning his servants: when hee seeth, that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, nor left.*

When Israel was brought to those straits, the Red-sea before them, the Egyptians behind them, and mountains on each side them: then saith Moses, *fear not, stand still; and see the salvation of the Lord,* Exod. 14. 13. As if he had said; you are now in straits: your extremities are great: and now is the time for God to help: now is Gods time to do wonders for you. There are two times,

1. *Mans Time.*

2. *Gods Time.*

Mans time is, when ever wee are in need, when ever we are in trouble: but Gods time is, only when all helps fail, when no relief is in the arm of flesh, then all is in God.

God is ever ready to put forth himself in desperate cases, because then his mercy and power will be most conspicuous, his People most thankfull, and deliverance most glorious.

It is an old experienced Truth, *Mans extremity is Gods opportunity.* The depth of Mans misery calls in for the depth of Gods mercy.

It may be observed in all *Ecclesiastical Histories*, that when deliverance

liverance approached, then was persecution the hottest. The Scribes and Pharisees blasphemed most, when their Kingdome was neerest to ruine. In this, like the Devil, who roars most, when his time is shortest.

The greatest darknesse is before the morning watch, when the morning is darkest, then comes the day, when trouble is greatest, then comes deliverance.

You know, when the task of bricks was doubled, then was Moses sent to deliver.

The Ancient Tragedians, when things were brought to that strait, that there could bee no possibility of humane help imagined, they used to bring down some of their Gods out of the Clouds, and thence was the phraise *ὁ θεὸς ἀπὸ μυχῶν*, which was not much differing from that among the Jews-- *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.*

Gods promises are never neerer fulfilling, than when to sense and reason they seem furthest off from fulfilling. This was *Abrahams* case, when at Gods command hee was about to sacrifice his *Isaac*.

6. The time when God doth wonders for his Church, is, When God doth give and hold up a mighty spirit of Prayer in his People to seek.

You see this in the deliverance of the Church out of the *Babylonish* captivity. In which deliverance God expressed many wonders of mercy to his Church. At which time God raised up *A mighty Spirit of Prayer* in them to seek. As you see in *Dan.* 9. 2, 3. And this was prophesied in *Psal.* 102. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, the set time is come. Why? how shall wee know, that Now is the time? hee shews in the 14th verse. For thy servants take pleasure in the stones, and favour the dust thereof; that is, they mourn, and they Pray. And therefore it is time for thee to help and deliver, as you see in the 17th vers. Thou shalt regard the Prayer of the desolate, and not despise their Prayer.*

As when the Lord hath an intent to destroy a People, he doth either expressly charge them, not to pray for them, as hee did *Jeremy*, chap. 14. 11. *Pray thou not for this people; and chap. 7. 16. Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry, nor Prayer for them, neither make intercession to mee: For I will not hear thee.*

Or hee doth secretly dead and straiten their spirits, that they cannot Pray.

So, when hee doth stirre up the hearts of his People to seek him, It is an evident demonstration, that God will do great things for that People.

Hee hath told us, that *Hee will not forsake them that seek him*, when the eyes and hearts of Gods People are big with sorrow, then is Gods mercy big with deliverance, ready to be delivered.

Wicked

Wicked men have a measure of sin to fill, as God said of the *Amorites*. *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.* And Christ to the *Scribes and Pharisees*. *Fill you up the measure of your Fathers,* Mat. 23. 22.

When the *Harvest is ripe*, then will God put in his *Sickle*, Joel 3. 13. *put in the Sickle, for the Harvest is ripe, for the wickedness is great.*

In a word. God hath a *bag* for the sins of the wicked, Job 14. 17. And God hath a *bottle* for the tears of his servants, Psal. 56. 8. *Hee bags up sins; and hee bottles up tears.* And when once his bag is full of the transgressions of the wicked: and his bottle is full of the tears of the Saints: *Then shall salvation come to Zion; then will God stir up himself, for the relieving and succouring of his Church.*

When wicked men are ripe for *Destruction*, the Church ripe for *Deliverance*; then will God perform his whole work upon Zion, and will punish the fruit of the proud Doer.

7. When the glory of God is mightily concerned. His worship, his Truth, his Cause; *Then is the time*, God will do wonders. Though God will not do it for us; yet hee will do it for his own *Names sake*. Hee will not suffer his glory to bee polluted.

And this was the Argument *Josbna* had, *Josb. 7. 8, 9.* When *Israel* had sinned, and God had delivered them up to their enemies, hee pleads with God. *Lord, what will become of thy great Name!* Though *Israel* deserve not that thou shouldst stand out for them; yet let not thy glory suffer for their sin; but let thy *Name*, which is so much concerned, draw thee out to relieve and help.

The like you have, *Isa. 48. 9, 10, 11.* *For my Names sake I will defer my anger; and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. For my own sake, even for my own sake will I do it: For how should my Name bee polluted? And I will not give my glory to another,* 2 King. 18. 35. *Who are there among the Gods of the Countries, that have delivered their Country out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?* Here you see now was Gods *Glory* concerned, and therefore to preserve his own *Glory*, hee shews a wonder to help them.

And happy are they, whose delivertance is joyned with Gods *Glory*. Though God will not alway deliver for our sake, yet will hee deliver for his *Glory*, for his own *Name-sake*. As hee tells them in *Ezek. 36. 32.* *Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, bee it known unto you; bee ashamed and confounded for your own wayes, Oh house of Israel!* But though hee would not do it for their sakes; yet hee did it for his own sake, even for the *Glory of his own Mercy*, as you see in that place.

And to show the Lord's love to his people, hee will deliver them for his own sake, even for the glory of his own Mercy, as you see in that place. *5. Quere,*

5. *Quere.*

5. *How shall wee know, that God will work a wonder for us?*

Wee are now in sad and distressed conditions, and a wonder must bee wrought for the helping and relieving of us. But whether God will work a wonder for us, or no: *There is the great question.* This I am sure of, *If God do not work a wonder for us, wee shall bee made a wonder.* Nay, three Wonders to all Nations,

1. Wee shall bee made a wonder of folly, a wonder of madness. Who, *because none else could,* therefore we would with our own hands ruine our selves. Which should wee effect, it would bee the grief of our friends, the joy of our enemies, the Popes Holy-day, Germanies tears, Irelands ruine, Scotlands hazard, and our own overthrow.

2 Wee shall bee made a wonder of scorn, a hissing, and a by-word to all Nations: That England, (that was *Compendium Mundi*: Of which I may say, as did the Historian of Ormus, that if the whole World were a Ring, England were the Diamond) that England should ruine her self, and with the foolish Woman in the Proverbs, pull down her house with her own hands.

3 And a wonder of misery. For all the World were not able to bring that misery upon us, that wee shall bring upon our selves. In which combustion, if wee preserve our Jewels, though wee lose the rest, it's well. But wee may fear all will bee endangered; if those, (who were the first movers of our trouble: such, who Viper-like would eat out the heart of their common Parent) bee not taken away.

Well then. The case is so with us, As a wonder must bee done, or wee shall bee made a wonder: a wonder of folly, scorn, misery: But whether or no, God will now do wonders for us; Here is the Question.

And I must confess, there are many sad presages of evil amongst us: many things which speak, that God will rather make us a wonder, than do a wonder for us.

1 Grounds of Fear.

I will first give you the grounds of my Fears, and then give you the grounds of my Hopes, that God will not desert us at this time.

The Grounds of Fear are

1 *Esther Spiritual*

2 *Or Natural.*

1 Spiritual grounds of Fear.

1 *Spiritual; and they are*

1 *The Universality of sin*

2 *The Impendency.*

3 *The obstinacy of sin amongst us.*

1 Universality of sin.

1 *The Universality of sins.* All persons, all places are fill'd with all kinds of sins. The Land is full of Adulteries, full of Oathes, full of Oppression, full of Injustice, of Pride, Prophana-tion of the Sabbath, contempt of the Ordinances; full of Drunkenness,

kennels, the whole land is defiled with blood: Prince, and People, Magistrates and Ministers; great and small, poor and rich: Wee are all defiled with sin. Wee may take up the complaint of the Prophet, *Isa. 1. 6. from the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, nor bound up, nor mollified with ointment.*

But there are four sins especially that threaten evil to us, and those are such, as do more immediately concern God and his worship.

- 1 *Idolatry.*
- 2 *Prophanation of his Ordinances*
- 3 *Prophanation of his Sabbath.*
- 4 *Contempt and abuse of his Ministers.*

1 *Idolatry.*

Any of which are enough to sink a Nation, though guilty of no more.

2. But secondly, Adde unto this, *The impudency of sin.* Sin hath gotten a *whores-forehead*, without modesty, or restraint. Men are not ashamed to publish sin as *Sodom*, and their iniquities like unto *Gomorrab*. Not ashamed to swear, to drink, to prophane the Sabbath, to contemn Ordinances. Many are more ashamed to pray, than others are to swear.

2 *Impudency of sin.*

3 And thirdly, Adde to this, *The obstinacy of sin.* Sin is not only universal and impudent; but it is grown obstinate, stubborn and incorrigible. Infomuch, that neither Mercy, nor Judgement; Word, nor Works; Promises, nor Threats will bee powerful to perswade with men. Then indeed may sin bee said to bee incorrigible, when it is grown too strong for that means God hath set up, to keep it down. When sin is too strong for the Ordinances, and Offices God hath set up for the suppressing and keeping down of sin. Then it is incorrigible, *Jer. 6. ult. The Bellows are burnt. The Prophets lungs consumed.*

3 *Obstinacy of sin.*

Besides these, diverse others might bee named.

- 1 *Too much fleshy confidence.*
- 2 *Our unanswerable walking to the means and mercies wee enjoy.*

2 *Natural grounds of Fear.*

1. *The great opposition of wicked men, and unsound spirits, against the indeavours of Reformation.*

2 *Natural grounds of Fear.*

Too many there are, who hate to bee reformed. Old bottles will never brook with new Wine. Nor will old hearts close with a spiritual way.

It is now with us as the Lord complained of *Ephraim*. *Hos. 7. 1. When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered.* All the while before their corruptions did lye a sleep, they little thought there were any such spirits in them: But when the Physician comes, then they appear.

2 *The schismes and Divisions among us*: which threaten evil upon us. If wee had joyned our mutual strength against the common adversaries, and not turned the heat of contention upon our selves, wee had not now been so weak, nor our adversaries so strong.

But I hope wee shall bee like sheep, that though a fair day hath scattered us all over the field, one from another, yet a storm will drive us together again, seeing herein our concerns are mutual and reciprocal.

3 *The wilful blindness and security among us*. That men will not see how much their Religion, their Liberties, and Priviledges are concerned. Or, if they do, yet (with Gallio) *they care for none of these things*. At least, not so much as to hazard and adventure any thing for the securing and upholding of them.

4 *Misling of Opportunities*. O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! *Hadst thou known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes*, Luk. 19. 41, 42. There are some special times when God doth put advantages into the hands of his people; the loss whereof is never recovered again.

It is not here as with *Tides*, that if wee miss this, wee may go with the next; but if wee miss this, perhaps wee shall never have another.

And these are the chief grounds of my fear, that cause cross thoughts in mee, and give way to suspicion, *that God will not do wonders for us*.

2 Grounds of Hope.

Yet to these let mee adde the grounds of my hope. That even at this time, *God will do wonders for England*.

Now then the Arguments that may perswade with us, and the Reasons, which may induce us to beleeye, *that God will do wonders*, are these five:

1 *From God*.

1 From God.

1 Such as are taken *from God*, and that

1 *From the goodness of his Nature*. Hee is gracious and mercifull. Gracious in himself, and exceeding gracious to his Saints.

Though wee have never a Promise for a particular deliverance at this time, yet wee may venture our selves upon the good nature of God, *That hee will not deliver us up into the hands of cruel, merciless, and bloody men, who seek our ruine*.

Though our sins bee many, and God might scourge us sharply, as wee deserve, yet hee loves his People so well, as not to put them into the hands of such cruel men to bee punished.

You have some ground for this suggestion in *Deut. 32. 27*. When God was highly displeased with *Israel*, and threatened to destroy them, yet *hee feared the wrath of the enemy*. Hee feared they would deal too hardly, that they would destroy them rather

ther than scourge them. Hee knew not how to put them into their hands, Though *Israel* had sinned, yet hee was loath to make use of sinners to punish sin: He knew the *Mercies of the wicked were cruel mercys*.

2 A second Argument from God is, *Because Gods glory is now much concern'd*. It is not alone our good, but his own glory, that is concerned: and hee will have a care of that. Though hee will not do it for us, yet hee will do it for *his own Names sake*.

There are many things, which hee will not do for our sakes: yet will hee for his own sake. You see in *Ezek. 36. 32. Not for your sakes, do I this, O house of Israel*. But though hee would not do it for their sakes, yet he would do it, because his glory was concern'd; Hee would do it for his *own Names sake*, you have the like expressions, *Exod. 32. 12. Deut. 9. 28. Isa. 48. 9, 10, 11.* Though *Israel* had provoked God, yet for his own Glory sake he would deliver them.

And if wee do not look with two partiall eyes, I cannot see, that *Ever the glory of God was more nearly and closely concern'd*, in all the stories, I have read, than it is at this time.

Gods Glory in his Truth, in his worships, in his Saints, in his Ordinances, they are all nearly concern'd at this Time.

And how would wicked men triumph, how would our enemies insult and glory? What pious heart could indure to hear those Blasphemies, they would cast up against heaven, and those contempts cast upon the People of God.

2. Arguments from the Church, *There are some Arguments taken from the Church of God in generall*. And that is, that

The good of most of the reformed Churches in the Christian world, doth depend upon the welfare of England. And in a great measure, upon the good successe of this present Parliament.

If it should not go well with us, *Scotland* would be hazarded, *Ireland* ruinated, *Germany* recovered; And all the reformed Churches in the Christian world would feel the smart of our stripes.

And therefore, seeing the preservation and deliverance of *England*, is of such publick concernment, it is much perswade with us, That God will rather do a wonder, than *England* shall not be preserved.

3. Arguments from our selves, *There may be some Arguments taken from our selves, to induce us to hope, that God will do a wonder for us.*

1. Though it bee true, wee have many fearful sins, and abominations among us; And those are publick too, such as have overspread the whole land: yet these sins are not national, they have not yet been countenanced by a Law. There is *prophaneation of the Sabbath*.

2 From the Church in general.

3 Arguments from our selves

bath. But there are good Laws against it, and for the strict observing of it. There hath been Idolatry among us, But there have been Laws against it; *Swearing*, yet Laws for the punishing of them.

Which affords mee this comfort: 1. That, though these sins bee in our Nation, and do abound among us: yet they are not the *Sins of our Nation*. There have been Laws against them: and so long they are not national.

And it hath been

1. *Either the Corruption.*

2. *Or the cowardise of our Magistrates,*

That sin hath not been punished. I say, the corruption of many, who have strengthened the hands of evil doers, either conniving at them, siding with them, or abetting of them in their way. And so those, who should have been the bolts to have kept out sin, have been the Latches to draw in sinne, let in sin.

Or it hath been the *Cowardise* of them, that they durst not appear for the punishing of sinne, Ezek. 22. 30. *I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before mee, for the land; that I should not destroy it: I sought for a Phineas, that might stand up to execute Judgement, and what was there none? Certainly there were many: but they were Cowards and durst not appear against sin.*

2. Though these sins were in a kind *National*, as indeed the Corruption and connivance of them in Authority gives too much largeness to them, increaseth the latitude of them, makes them of greater extent and guilt: yet *now wee are about reforming them.*

And wee never read, that ever God did ruine a Nation, when a Nation was in a way of reforming.

Indeed, that which comes neereſt to it, and that, which is the saddest peece in all the Scriptures, is in that example of *Jofiah*: Hee ſet upon the work of Reformation, yet God held up his purpose of destroying that people; You ſhall read it 2 King. 23. 26, 27. *Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceneſſe of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled againſt Judah, &c.* Notwithstanding all that Reformation, as you may ſee in that Chapter: *Yet the anger of the Lord was not turned back, but his hand was ſtretched out ſtill;* Firſt, to cut off that godly King, and afterwards to cut down that ungodly people.

1. But firſt I muſt tell you, That Gods decree was then paſt againſt them. And God had pronounced it long before, as you ſee in his meſſage to *Hezekiah*, 2 King. 20. 17. and I hope there is yet no Decree gone out againſt England.

2 And ſecondly, Though he would not revoke, what he had Decreed: yet this good act of *Jofiah* procured the Deferring of
Gods

Gods Judgements, all his days, 2 King. 22. 18, 19, 20. But to the King of Judah, thus shall yee say to him, Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evill that I will bring upon this place.

So that this is yet strong. God did never destroy a Nation at any time, when his People were about the Reforming of that Nation.

And it hath pleased God at this time, to set us up a choice Assembly. *An Assembly chosen by Prayer, brought together by Prayer, and held together, and preserved to this day, by the might of Prayer.*

And their spirits have been held up amidst many difficulties and strong oppositions, to Hazard themselves, their lives, and estates, for the good of our souls, our bodies, and estates.

And I say, it was never heard of, nor read of: It is an untracted case, that God should destroy a Nation, whilst they are such, whom hee hath himself singled out, and set up for the Reforming of a Nation.

If hee would have destroyed us, hee would never have been at the pains to Reform us. One cannot stand with the other.

3 A third Argument from our selves. And that is taken from the beginnings of mercy.

You know what our Condition hath been before; the remembrance of it is fresh. God at that time did hear the cry of our souls, and pittied us in our low estate, and did go forth in the beginnings of mercy to us. And may wee not Reason; if God would have destroyed us, he would never have done thus much for us.

That which God hath done is an earnest unto us, and an engagement upon God, To go on in the finishing of what he hath begun to do for us already.

Shall wee think, hee hath brought us out of Egypt, to destroy us in the Wildernesse? Shall wee think, the Sun of Mercy hath shined on us, but only to warm our heads against a storm: shall wee think, hee hath exalted us thus high, that hee might lay us the lower in the end?

Indeed thus God hath done with the wicked. But wee never read that hee hath so done with his own people.

Shall wee think hee hath delivered us from lesser, to reserve us to greater Judgements? Freed us from Rods, to whip us with Scorpions? delivered us from lesser evils, to ruine us at once? this cannot bee I think, though the appearances were greater against us than they are.

Thus God may do with wicked men, but thus God did never do with his own.

A fourth Argument taken from our selves, to induce us to Hope, that God will do a *wonder* for us, is, There is a stock of Prayers going out, and laid up for the good of this Church and Nation.

Many Prayers have been made. And I tell you, all the praying spirits in the World are now at work for *England*. Who hath a tongue, and doth not speak? who hath a hand, and doth not stretch it out? and I tell you, this is something considerable.

If the Prayer of one *Moses* could do so much, what will the prayers of so many thousands? What? hath God heard *England* for *Scotland*? and *England* for *Ireland*? and will hee not hear *England* for it self? that were strange. Shall they save all others, but their own souls?

Indeed wee sometimes read, that praying spirits could not prevail to save others: but yet they saved their own souls. As God said; *Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in Jerusalem, they should not deliver Son nor Daughter, they should only bee delivered themselves*, Ezek. 14. 20. But wee never read, that they should prevail to save others, and yet not bee able to save their own souls. Will God then hear us for others, not for our selves? would a friend grant you a request for another? and deny the same to your self? No certainly. Nor will God.

A fifth Argument is; *This hath been a time, wherein God hath drawn out the Graces of his People*; which perhaps had they been suppressed and not discovered, wee had been in no hazard.

And do you think that God will draw out the graces of his People, for the destruction of his people? Indeed nothing is more ordinary, than to draw out the sins and corruptions of wicked men, for their own ruine, to bee Cart-ropes to binde themselves. But wee never heard God did draw out the graces of his people for their ruine. Wee read, hee hath hardened wicked men to destruction: but never made the heart tender, sensible to destruction. Men have perished by their fear, deserting the cause of God: but never any who perished by their courage and standing to it.

Did *Esther* lose any thing by her Obedience? did *Daniel*? did the *three Children*? It brought them into the fire, but preserved them in the fire: nothing was consumed but their bands: not one hair was singed. Though God do draw out the sins of wicked men; to their destruction, as *Pharaoh, Haman, &c.* yet hee never draws out the graces of his People to their destruction.

I say no more but this. If God should not preserve us; if hee should not do a *wonder* for us at this time, it is an untracted peece of Providence: wee have not a president of the like, since God had a Church: Hee doth with us so, as hee never did with any of his people since the beginning of the World.

4. Arguments from our enemies.

4 From our enemies.

4 The fourth head of Arguments is taken from our enemies: which

which may induce us to Hope, that God will do a wonder for us. Consider then,

1 *Their former wickedness*, which shall hunt them, and finde them out.

2 *Their present sinfulness*, such as these

1. *Their Pride.*

2. *Their Prophaneness.*

3. *Their scorn and contempt of God and his waies.*

4. *Their Cruelty.*

5. *Their Blasphemies and Bloody-hell-born-Oathes.*

All which induce mee to hope, That God will never give a blessing to the means, nor yet to the men. They have but escaped the hand of man, that they may fall into the hand of God: The Justice of men, that the Justice of God, who is a punisher of sin, a consuming fire, might at once bee revenged of them. But I shall only give you two things to consider of. Consider then

1 *The Persons against whom they are.*

2 *The Persons, who are against us.*

1 *The Persons against whom they set themselves.* And that is, against his Church, his People, his Saints, his Mourners, his Sighers, his Prayers, his Members, his Treasures, his Jewels: Such as are as dear to him as the apple of his eye: such as hee hath said, *hee will give men for, and people for their life.* Yea, and therefore are they enemies to these, because they are friends to God; because they run not out with them in the same excess of Riot, as the Apostle saith,

2. *Look upon the persons who are against us.* They are such as are declared to bee Papists, Atheists, scorers and contemners of God and his waies: such as are proud, prophane, cruel, and bloody-minded men: haters of God, blasphemers of his Name, by new and hel-born oathes, such as have made themselves obnoxious to the stroak of Justice. Many of whom have escaped the hand of man, that they may, I hope, fall into the hand of God; and the justice of man, that the justice of God might discover them, and finde them out, who will bee a sad avenger of these things.

Thus doth the wickedness of the enemy speak deliverance to the Church of God: when the Devil drives his servants so furiously, it is a sign they will quickly bee at their journeyes end. VVhen Satans rage is violent, it is not long, *Rev. 12. 17. Wee bee to the Inhabitants of the Earth* (that is, to the wicked, and the ungodly.) *But rejoyce yee Heavens:* (that is, yee Saints and People of God) *why? For the Devil is come down, having great wrath.* But can this bee a matter of rejoycing? Yea saith the Text, *Because hee hath but a short time.* VVhen the Devil comes down with great wrath, it prognosticates his time is not long. VVhen men are grown so hellish in their malice, their oathes and Blasphemies,

mies, that they are become an abhorring and abomination to men: Then will God certainly ease himself, and unburden a Nation of them. You have something to this, 2 Tim. 3. 8, 9. when their wickedness, of whom the Apostle speaks there, was abhorred of all men, Then (saith hee) they shall proceed no further.

Object. But you will tell mee, that this will not bee enough to perswade with us, that God will do a wonder for us: For wee sometimes read, that God hath given up the godly into the hands of wicked men, to bee punished: as you read ordinarily in Scripture. And Habakkuk complains of the like, Hab. 1. 17. Thou art of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity? Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man, that is more righteous than himself?

Ans. It is true. God hath sometimes given up a people to others, who have been greater sinners than themselves. Hee hath given up one wicked Nation, to another that was more wicked than they. But wee do not read that God hath given up the good of one to the evil and wicked of the same Nation. But then

1. VVhen God hath done this, it hath been, when hee was highly displeased with his people, after hee hath sent Prophets to warn them, to humble and reform them: and yet they would continue obstinate in their evil wayes, and would not bee reformed, as hee tells us at large, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16.

3. VVhen God hath done this, it hath been, when his own people have been so involved, and inwrapped with them, that there was no separating between them. And thus oftentimes the Saints may bee involved in the same general calamities with the bad, because of that politick union and conjunction that is between the Members of a State and Common-wealth. So in a Common-wealth universally sinful, a few righteous men may as parts of that sinful society, bee justly subject to those temporary evils, which the sins of that society have contracted upon them.

4. VVhen God hath done this, it hath been, when his own people have had communion with the sins of them, with whom they live. VVhen there is a communion with the evil of sin, wee must look for a communion with the evil of punishment. Oneness of sin brings Oneness of sufferings. But none of these are our case. For

1. VVee are not to bee delivered up to another Nation, but to those, who are Vipers in our own: and the good to the bad.

2. Though wee were involved together, yet they have separated themselves from us, which if it had not been done, wee might suspect, that such Fanes would raise storms.

Indeed, the way for wicked men to bee preserved, is, to bodey them-

themselves with the Saints, is to abide by them, while the Wheat and Tares grew together, the Tares were preserved. The Tares had not been preserved, if they had not been in the field with the Wheat: But being there, God would not pluck up the Tares, lest the Wheat also should be destroyed. But when the Wheat is gathered in, or if the Tares shall separate themselves from the Wheat, bundle themselves together against the Saints: it is the ready way to their own destruction, that is the way to have no mercy, when God may deal with them single, and there be none with them to bear off the blow.

4. Gods People have not communion with them in their sins.

1. They do not approve of them in their Judgements.

2. They do not consent to them in their wills.

3. They do not act them in their lives: This is to have Communion.

No, but further,

1. They are grieved with them, as Lot was, his soul was grieved with the sins of Sodom.

2. They are grieved for them, not only with them, but for them. They are matter of their mourning. Thus David shed rivers of tears, because the wicked kept not Gods Law, Ezek. 9. 4. A mark was to be set on the foreheads of them, who were Sighers and mourners for the sins of Jerusalem.

3. They are not only grieved with, and grieved for, but they Pray down, Preach down, mourn down, live down, the sins of this sinful Common-wealth, which may be an argument to us, that God will preserve us from that overflowing scourge, that devouring deluge, which he may bring upon wicked men.

5. Argument.

5. The fifth Argument to induce us to hope, that God will now do a wonder for us, is taken from the Consideration of those great things, which God hath promised to do for his Church and People, in this latter end of the world.

Indeed God hath done much for his People in all ages of the World, you may see his Wonders upon record. But all these are nothing in comparison of those, which he hath engaged himself to do for them hereafter.

The World is the stage, on which God will set all his Wonders, and it cannot be long before this frame be dissolved, and this stage be taken down. If Saint Johns time were the last hour, surely ours are the last minute.

But yet God will not take down the stage, till all hath been acted, which he hath engaged himself to do for his Church.

Now I say, God hath engaged himself to destroy that man of sin, to make his Church glorious.

Read at your leasure; how much God hath promised to do for his Church, in *Isa. 60.* throughout, *Glorious Promises*, which though they had a gradual accomplishment in the first Preaching of the Gospel, yet not so fully as the Words there hold out, which yet must bee made good, and therefore it is yet to be expected.

Hitherto the Church hath been buried up under reproach, scorn, and persecution: hitherto sufferings, Prisons, Fires, stakes, they have been the Portion of the Church.

As yet, (though we have had our *Lucida intervalla*, our *Respites*, and *Breathings*) The Church of God hath been, like *Noahs Ark*, tossing, and fluctuating upon the Billows, and devouring waves of troubles and Persecutions. And the *Saints under the Altar*, the blood of the slain, crys, *How long Lord, holy and true!* though they say, *How long*, yet they say, *Holy and true*. They give God the glory of his truth and faithfulness. Though hee defer the accomplishment, of what he hath promised, yet hee is true of his promise.

And hath God engaged himself to make his Churches glorious, and that before the end of all things? And is the day so neer to an End? And is God faithfull, is hee true of his Promise? why this may something perswade with us, that notwithstanding the present oppositions, and troubles, God is now coming in with mercy and deliverance to his Church and People.

And God hath not left us without home-hopes, that the work is begun -- That mighty Spirit of Prayer, which God hath poured out upon his People; That increase of light and knowledge, the weakening of the man of sinne, in those two Limbs, whereon hee hath stood so strongly: *Germany* and *Spain*: that numerous increase of converts, within these few years: All which are fore-running signs of the *Rising Condition of the Church*. God doth not use to beget Children to the Murderers; nor to increase the number of his People, to fatten the sword of the enemy.

Indeed, when God hath intended to bring judgements upon a People, Hee hath taken his People away: hee hath lessened the number, as hee tells us *Isa. 57.* Hee takes them away from the evil to come: but hee never increaseth them against judgements. As the lessening prelageth judgement: so, when he increaseth them, it is a preface of mercy.

Every one, that is now brought in, every Convert we have, is a Pledge to this Nation, that God will not destroy this Nation. Nay, it is an evidence, that God will do great things for us.

Act. 7. 17. It is said, *When the time of Promise drew nigh, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt.* Their growing was a sign of their rising: their increase discovered the promised mercy was not far off.

And

And these are the hopeful signs, that the day of the Churches redemption draws nigh, and is even at the doors: As Christ said of the fig-tree, when you see the Fig-tree bud, and put forth her leaves, know that Summer is nigh; So when you see these things, you may know, that the Churches Redemption is at hand. God is risen upon his throne, and will not sit down (if our sins do not make him repent) till hee have made his Church glorious in the earth.

And now having told you my thoughts, and that which persuades with me to hope, that God will do a wonder for us, yet I must tell you again (that you may not bee discouraged with the sad appearance of things) that wee may suffer many throws, many pangs, much opposition, and perhaps some blood, before these things. God will save us *From trouble, by trouble*: He will bring us through a Sea, and through the wilderness unto Canaan. Yet I will say as *Josuah* did, Numb. 14. 8. *If the Lord hath any delight in us, hee will bring us into this Land.*

God seldome doth great things, without great commotions. *Paul* and *Silas* were not delivered out of Prison, but by an Earthquake. Though it bee grievous to see, yet it is that wee fear. And wee must not forsake a good cause, because of opposition. This were to leap out of the ship, because the winds blow: to bee impatient of the Ark, because the billows rise: to seek our safety in the midst of Danger.

This assure your selves: Though Earth and hell should fight against you: your safety lyes on Gods side, in Gods cause: and there is no safety elsewhere.

These things I suggest to you, by way of Cautious advise: that when you see these things, you may not be troubled. As Christ said to his Disciples, *These things I tell you before, that when they do come to passe, your hearts may not bee troubled*: So these things I tell you before, that, though God will deliver us from trouble, yet it will bee by trouble: though hee save us, yet it shall bee by fire: that, when you see these things you may not bee troubled, when you see storms to fall, oppositions and troubles to arise, you may not bee moved from your own steadfastness.

I tell you, this is necessary advice, a reasonable admonition to you: lest the oppositions and seeming contraries of Gods proceedings should weaken your faith, and move you from your own steadfastnesse.

The best of us are too apt to live by sense, and not by faith; by sights, and not by the Words, by Gods outward appearances, and proceedings of Providence, and not by Promises. And therefore our Faith, doth wane, or increase according as God doth let out, or restrain himself in the ways of his Providence, when God doth let out himself to succour and relieve his Church, when wee see deliverance in the Promise, and deliverance in his outward proceedings too, then wee can believe: but, if God do any

way restrain himself, or his outward Proceedings do seem to walk contrary to his own Promises: Though perhaps that bee the next way for the performance of his Promises. As you see it was with *Joseph*, with *Israel* in *Egypt*, where the Promise spake one thing, and Gods outward proceedings seemed to speak another.

In this case wee are ready to give up all; and thus did *David*: I shall one time or other perish by the hand of *Saul*, and therefore wee should learn this lesson in some kinde, to shut our eyes to the works of God, and look upon the Word of God: Not only to look upon the outward proceedings of Providence: but upon the stability and truth of the Promise: and see the Word say Yea, when the Works seem to say Nay: and conclude, because the Promise saith, it shall bee, though all secondary means, whereby the Promise should bee performed; say, *It shall not bee.*

VVee read that *Uliſes*, when hee was to pass the Coast of the *Syrens*, hee caused his men to stop their ears, that they might not bee enchanted by their musick, to destroy themselves: But for himself, hee would only bee bound to the Mast, that though hee should hear, yet their musick might not bee so strong as to allure him to destroy himself, and leap into the Sea.

There are some of Gods people who are weak in Faith: And when they see Gods outward proceedings of Providence seemingly contrary to his Promises, they are apt to bee charmed from their own stedfastness. Now as for these, it were good for them to stop their ears, and to shut their eyes to the works, and look altogether upon the Word of God: But there are some that are stronger, and therefore may look upon the outward proceedings of God: But withall let them binde themselves fast to the Mast, the Word of God, lest, when they see the seeming contrariety of his proceedings to the Promise, they bee charmed from their own stedfastness, to the wounding of their own souls.

God hath promised, that *Antichrist* shall fall: Hee hath promised to make his Church glorious. And though in outward proceedings hee should seem to uphold the one, and evil intreat the other; yet let not this weaken our Faith, in beleieving the truth of what God hath promised.

If you put a straight stick into the water, yet sense will render it to bee crooked; it will appear so to the eye: but reason corrects it, and tells you, though it appear to bee so, yet it is not so, you put it in straight, and so it is.

Doth reason prevail against sense? and why should not Faith prevail against Reason? when to outward appearance, God seems to bee against us, why should not wee by Faith conclude, that God is for us? even for us, when hee seems to bee against

The outward face of things may bee such as may possesse the Church with fear, when God hath a purpose to do great things for his Church. So you read in *Joel 2. 23.* *Fear not, O Land, bee glad, and rejoyce; for the Lord will do great things for you.* It was a time of Joy, in respect of Gods purpose, and yet a time of fear, in respect of their present apprehensions. God had a purpose to do great things for them, and yet the face and outward appearance of things were such, as did at that time possesse the Church with fear. It was so; but it should not have been so.

You see what Christ saith, in *Luk. 21. 25.* *There shall bee sign in the Sun, in the Moon, in the Stars, and upon the earth distresse of Nations; the Sea and Waters roaring, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after the things that shall come upon the Earth; for the Powers of Heaven shall bee shaken.* Could there bee a sadder appearance? And yet saith Christ, *when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*

Here you see Christ doth turn the saddest and sorest perplexities, that ever the world shall see, into a Doctrine of Comfort, to his Church; because all these things were but a preparatory to the redemption of the Church.

One would think this to bee a strange consequence deduced from such an Antecedent: A Consequence so comfortable, from an Antecedent so terrible: that so terrible a Doctrine should afford us an use of *Consolation*. Yet so it is. Bee the promises what they will, the conclusion is good: Bee his Providences what they will, his Promise is good; and those promises shall turn all those Providences to good.

And this is the admonition I give you, that whatever oppositions, whatever troubles, whatever evils wee meet withall in the way of deliverance, Bee not troubled, let not your hearts bee discouraged: for this is the way whereby God will do you good; making all your evil and trouble subservient to good.

What the Apostle saith of his Bonds, I may say of all oppositions, *Phil. 1. 12.* *The things which have happened to mee, have fallen out to the furtherance of the Gospel.* His prison was the Gospels liberty, his straits and bonds, the Gospels enlargement, his abasements, the Gospels advancements.

As wee say, the choicest blessings come out of the fire of afflictions: so the greatest deliverances come out of the greatest oppositions. And thus much for that.

¶ Wee will now come to Application

uses

First of Information, and that of diverse particulars.

1. It informs us of the greatness of our God.

1 Information touching the greatness of God.

1 of

1. Of his Power.
2. Of his Wisdome.
3. Of his Mercy.
4. Of his faithfulness, toward his people.

For all these Attributes are visibly declared in every wonder God doth for his Church.

1 His Power.

1 God discovers the greatness of his Power in every wonder hee doth for them. If a man were able to do it, it were no wonder. Hence hee is said to make bare his arm, to reveal his Power, And it is attributed to his right hand, to his out-stretched arm, &c.

2 His Wisdome.

2. God discovers the greatness of his Wisdome.

1. *Wisdome in the Manner*, In relieving in such a way as could not bee conceived.

2. *Wisdome in the Time*, In helping in such a time, when things are desperate; or in such a time, when hee gets himself most glory, and doth us most good.

3. *Wisdome in the means*, by relieving of us.

1. *By such means as wee never thought of*, or

2. *By such, as if wee had thought of, would have been judged too small to have wrought so great a deliverance.*

3. *Or by such, which wee should rather have judged a means of ruine, than of raising us: yet Gods wisdome seeth more than wee can.*

3 Gods Mercy.

3. God discovers abundance of Mercy, yea and Free Mercy. Every deliverance of his Church being wrought out of his own bowels and compassion, *Psal. 136.* (which is a Psalm of praises for wonders.) You see at the foot of every verse, a declaration of Mercy -- *Hee brought his People out of Egypt, for his Mercy endureth for ever. Hee divided the Red-Sea, for his Mercy endureth for ever. Hee overthrew Pharaoh and his Host, for his Mercy endureth for ever.*

4 Gods Truth.

4. God discovers his Truth and Faithfulness to his Church. God hath ingaged himself by many precious promises to do wonders for them. And all the deliverances of God, they are performances of promises. They may bee all subscribed at the foot of the promise, as so many particular instances and experiences to prove the truth of the promise, and to discover the faithfulness of the Promiser to us. They are so many witnesses to both. *By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall bee established*, saith the Apostle. It is true, it is spoken of the word of man, not of the Word of God. *God is Truth it self.* You may beleve him without a witness. But yet *God hath not left himself without witness*; As the Apostle saith. Nor hath God left any word without witness.

There is never a truth, never a promise in the Word, but it hath been made good by a thousand experiences; wee have a *Book of Experiences*, to annex to the book of *Promises*, of the many

many wonders, which God hath in all ages wrought for his people: all which doth discover the faithfulness and truth of God, and the Promise to us.

2. Information. This may inform us *of the blessed and happy Condition of the Saints*, who have interest in such a God, as can do wonders for them: Propriety in all-sufficiency doth make the enjoyer happy. And what a blessed Condition is this, to have interest in such a God, who can do wonders, for the relieving of us. 2 Information

Though your troubles may bee too big for man, yet not for God; your miseries and extremities may bee above the supply of creatures: but they cannot bee above the *Power of God*; Hee can do wonders: hee can do that, which man cannot do.

Though you have no ordinary means of help, yet you have interest in a God, who can do *extraordinary things*: yea, and *Extraordinary things in an ordinary way*: nay, by *Ordinary means*, if hee undertake the work. I may say concerning such, as the Psalmist -- *Blessed are the people that are in such a case. Blessed are the people, whose God is the Lord*, P sal. 144. 15.

3. Information. This may inform us, *How precious the Saints are in the esteem of God, what love hee bears to his Church*, that hee will do wonders for them. Wonders for their preservation from trouble, and wonders for their deliverance out of trouble. 3 Information

Men may do smaller curtesies for ordinary and common friends: and they may give their dole to them, they do not care for. But, if they will *lay out the utmost of their power, of their strength, and estates, to hold up, or to do good to, or to relieve one*: we must needs conclude, they love such intirely.

Gods Dole, his common blessings of this life, will not bee enough to evidence his love: *Hee causeth his Sunne to shine, and his rain to fall upon the good and bad promiscuously*. But when God doth exercise the greatness of his Power, Wisdome, Truth, Mercy, as he doth in the wonders hee doth for his Church: this is an evident sign of that love he bears thereto.

Wicked men may bee subjects on whom he doth exercise the Wonders of his Justice, and of his Power, As *Pharaoh*. But the Saints are they, for whom hee doth exercise the wonders of his mercy, in mercy. Gods wonders are for the good, or for them in a good way.

4. Information. This may inform us, that the *Condition of the Church is oftentimes, very sad, very dark, very evil*: because a wonder must bee expressed for relieving of them. 4 Information

Ordinary reliefs may help ordinary distempers. But when extraordinary must bee used, it declares the conditions are exceeding sad.

The very doing of a wonder for relief, implyes a condition to

Rex honores
dignis congia-
rium et indig-
nis. Senec.

bee such, as is beyond the helps and succours of humane and created Power. If men could help, if means could relieve, it were no wonder to help. Therefore this implies, that the *Condition of the Church*, in respect of things below, *may be oftentimes very sad, very miserable; yet*

Information

5. This informs us again, that the Conditions of Gods People, *Come never to bee so sad and uncomfortable, as thereby to despair of help and relief:* seeing wee have a God who doth wonders for us. Our Condition is not so low, but a Wonder may raise us up again.

Wee may bee *hopeless and helpless*, in respect of Creature supplies and reliefs: but wee can never be *Hopeless*, never *helpless* in respect of Gods; when Creature-helps fail, God doth but turn us from sense, to *Faith*; from reasoning, to beleeving, from Creatures, to himself. Hee bids us shut our eyes, to the things below, and look altogether above, as *Jehoshaphat* did -- *Lord, wee know not what to do; but our eyes are up unto thee.* And *David* too, *when hee encouraged himself in the Lord his God.* In the most hopelesse condition there is a door of hope: because deliverance is neere, when help seemes furthest off.

And Oh! that wee could learn, at such a time as this, *to live by Faith, and not by sense; to shut our eyes to works, and look upon the word of God:* we should then bee strong in God, and find encouragement from him, *when we see nothing, but discouragements from below.*

Wee are too apt to live *by sense, and not by faith*; and therefore accordingly as God doth let out, or restrain himself, in the wayes of his providence; so our faith doth wane, or increase.

We are too like *Hagar*; when the Bottle is dry, sit down, and Cry. Whereas, on the Contrary; wee should trust in God.

1. *In the weakness of means.* Though there bee weakness below, there's strength above, weakness and strength are all one with God. Nay

2. *In the want of means.* Though means bee wanting, yet God can create means: nay, do his work without means. Nay

3. *In the Opposition of means.* When the Word saith, *Yea*; though works say, *Nay*: when the Promise saith, *It shall be.* Though all *Secondary means*, whereby this Promise should bee effected, saith, *It shall not bee*: yet are wee to rest upon God, and the Promise.

God doth often speak one thing to sense; and another thing to Faith. Hee is not ever that in *Appearance*, which hee is in *Truth*. Hee may speak death to sense, as you see hee did to the *Children of Israel*, at the Red sea. Had they consulted with

with sense and Reason, they could see nothing, but death: when yet hee speaks life and deliverance to faith. As you see *Moses* saith -- *Fear ye not: stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.* God may, in outward appearance speak evill, when yet, in the purposes of his heart, he speaks good.

As God may seem to heal, when he means to destroy: to speak Peace in his Providence, when hee speaks terror in his word: so God may seem to kill, when he intends to cure: to destroy, when hee intends to save, *Jer. 29. 11.* -- *I know the thoughts, I have thought toward you, saith the Lord, the thoughts of Peace, and not of trouble: even to give you a desired end.* Though my proceedings seem to bee evil, yet my thoughts are good; though my wayes are war, yet my purposes are peace, to give you at the last, an expected end.

6. Information. This may inform us, That there is no ground for wicked men, to insult and glory, in any probable advantages, which they may have against the Church and People of God; God can work wonders for his Church and People.

You see in the verse before the Text, the Egyptians had many advantages against the People of God: and they promised to themselves certain and infallible success. They said, they would -- Pursue, they would overtake, they would divide the spoil, their Lust should bee satisfied on them, &c. But God shews a Wonder, and layes all their Pride, and all their hopes in the dust; what began in pride, did end in shame.

It was the best speech, that *Ahab* ever spake; when *Benhadad* made such a vain boast, that the dust of *Samaria* should not serve for handfuls of them, who followed him. -- Tell him, (saith *Ahab*) Let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself, as hee that putteth it off. -- God shews a wonder, and all is turned about, *1 King. 20. 11.* And forward *Benhadad*, and his thirty two Kings, who came to help him, fled before the face of seven thousand of *Israel*, as there you may read.

7. Information. This may inform us, What ingagements of duty and obedience do lye upon such a People, for whom God shall do wonders.

1. What ingagements of Love, Love is the Loadstone to beget Love. And God having exprest his love to us, how should this ingage us to love him again.

2. What ingagements of thankfulness, *Psal. 111. 4.* Hee hath done his wonderfull works to be remembered. As if hee had said. This is the end, I did these wondrous works for, that you should remember them. If you would not have remembered them, I would not have done them.

It is the speech of *Seneca*. This is the rule of good turns, that the giver must soon forget hee gave: but the receiver must never forget, he hath received.

Indeed God hath done wonders for this Nation; many wonders, wherein hee hath exprest his Wisdome, his Power, his mercy, his Justice; And yet God hath forgotten he hath given; he goes on as freely in mercy, as if every mercy were the first mercy he hath bestowed.

But have not we forgotten that we have received? if so, God will Remember, that he hath given.

God doth remember hee hath given, when his People forget they have received. As you see hee did to David: *I have done this and this, and if that had been too little, I would have given thee such and such things more*: so upbraiding him with his forgetfulness.

If you would not have God remember against you, what he hath given: do you then remember what you have received from God. This will quicken you to thankfulness.

8 Information

8. Information. If God do wonders for his Church, then let this discover unto us; *What ground, and what encouragement there is for us at this time,*

1. To trust in God.

2. To pray to him.

3. To hope in him.

4. To wait upon him; that he would do wonders for us. You have encouragements,

1. From the experience of God: he hath done wonders, read the 78. Psalm, and the 9th of Nehemiah; and you shall see a little Chronicle of the great Wonders, which God hath done for his Church and People. And this is a mighty encouragement, the experience of what God hath done for his People heretofore.

As wee may say of the Experience of Gods Judgements on the wicked. *Legē exemplum, ne exemplum fias*: read the example, lest thou thy self bee made an Example: read the example of Sodom, of Pharaoh, of Jerusalem. All these were set up, to deter you from their sins: As the judgements of God upon the wicked men, are set down to deter us from sin: so the mercyes and deliverances of the Church are recorded, To encourage us to believe, to trust in him, in the like difficulties.

Can our condition bee sadder than Israels was at the Red-sea than Davids was? than Jehoshaphats? than the Churches in Hamans time? And God did then deliver them, that wee might be encouraged to trust in him, in the like straits and difficulties.

And as wee have encouragement from the experience of Gods wonderfull deliverance of others: so we have encouragement from the wonderful deliverance of our selves.

Revolve in your thoughts those great deliverances in Eighty-eight in the Powder-Treasure: and that late deliverance which swallowed up all the rest: when the Heavens were black, the Clouds were gathered, and threatened to come down in a storm of blood: when two Armies

Armies were in the field, and ready to make our Land an Aseldema, a field of blood; yet how wonderfully God did then step in, to compose the differences, and to settle a peace, when there was nothing but expectations of war and ruine.

This our God hath done, and besides this many fresh and later experiences of his goodnesse: All which should now come in to encourage us to beleeeve, and trust in the same God, to do great things for us.

Indeed, wee ought to trust God, though wee had never tryed him; though wee had never experience from him. But when hee helps our Faith, by former experiences, this should strengthen our confidence, and make us to go unto God, as to a tryed friend.

Were wee but well read in the story of our lives, wee might have a Bible of our own, drawn out of the experiences of Gods dealings with our selves; and wee should bee able to say in any difficulty and distresse, *I dare trust God in this difficulty; I dare venture on him in this present distresse. I have tryed him, and have found him true, hee never failed mee. And because hee hath been my help, therefore under the shadow of his wings will I rejoyce, as saith the Prophet.*

2. A second encouragement is, *From the Power of God. Hee can do wonders.* Hee not only hath, but hee can do wonders still. *The Arm of the Lord is not shortened, that hee cannot save.* What hee hath done, hee can do. Hee is still as wise, as powerful, as faithful, as merciful as ever hee was. There is no shadow of change in him. There is nothing above his skill, nor above his power, if not above your Faith to beleeeve.

2. Encouragement.

It is our sin only, which hinders the current of Mercy, that stops the stream of Mercy: our unbelceef, our neglect of duty, our unthankfulness, our pride, &c. Let us remove these, and Mercy comes amain. You have a full place for it, *Judg. 10. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, &c.* You see there, that God had often times delivered them; hee had wrought many wonders for them; as hee tells them there. And they were now again in a new distresse, and therefore cry to God. But God tells them they had walked unworthy of former deliverances, and therefore hee would deliver them no more; whereupon they go and confesse their sins before God, they humble themselves, and reform their evil wayes. And (saith the Text) *His soul was then grieved for the misery of Israel. -- God delivers them.*

Well, this may bee our condition. God hath wrought many deliverances for us: wee are now in new straits, but wee have walked unworthy, and our sins may stand as an obstacle to hinder Gods proceedings of mercy. Let us now then humble our selves, and reform, and God will bee grieved for our misery, as hee was for theirs.

3 A third encouragement that wee have to these duties, is, from the consideration of Gods love to his Church, and many precious ingagements to them in promises. The Church is dear to him; wee are his Spouse, his Members, such as hee dyed for, &c.

Wee are his,

1. *By Choice.*
2. *By Purchase.*
3. *By Gift.*
4. *By Covenant.*

And being his, hee will do great things for us also.

Gods love to his Church is that, into which wee may resolve all the mercies hee doth for his Church; and is the only ground of our Faith and hope, to expect mercies from him. It is the Sea, the spring. Well then, having so strong encouragements to these duties, I would now have spent a little time to have pressed these duties on you; but I forbear.

9 Information:

9. Information. This may inform us, what is the reason *that God suffers wicked men to conceive, and to hatch mischief against the Church: Nay, and to bring up their designs to ripeness, that they are ready for execution: why God doth not disturb them all their way.* Here is the Reason. *Because hee can do wonders.* Though hee let them go on, yet they can never get the advantage of God, nor can they make it past Gods help. It is but *shewing a wonder at last, and all is dash.*

Men, when they see an adversary, whom they can easily Master, when they please, they will let them go on, counsel, advise, lay their heads and power together, and seem to take no notice of them. They know, the further they let them go, the fuller and compleater will bee their overthrow at last.

So doth God here. Hee suffers wicked men to go on, but is, because hee knoweth hee can overtake them, though they think they have got the start, before they come to the goal, or get the prize.

When men see, there would bee some hazard at last, when they had brought their design to ripeness, or did fear, that the adversary would bee too strong for them: then they will labour to hinder the beginnings and gatherings; they will indeavour to crush the birth of their counsels, or they will set themselves against their power, as soon as they can. And this is the wisest way among men.

But now God, hee can let them go on; hee can let them bring their designs to ripeness; they can never swell so big, as to bee too great for his power to conquer them; can never make their design so strong, as to *non-plus* his wisdom, and skill to help.

And therefore hee will let them go on, because hee can dash them in their Man-hood, as well as in their infancy, in their strength,

strength, as well as in their weaknesse. It is but shewing a wonder, and all is done.

And this was the Reason why God suffered the five Kings of Canaan to lay all their strength together, that they might be able to do that joyntly, which they were never able to do singly. Yet it is said, -- *The Lord hardened their hearts to join together, to come against Israel.* Though they thought by this means to overthrow Israel: yet Gods end was to make the quicker dispatch, the fuller overthrow of them.

And therefore hee let Pharaoh also to go on, did not stop him in his preparations, nor hinder him in his setting forth, but let him follow them to the utmost. God knew hee could have him at the last, hee could shew a wonder, and break all in peeces.

The like of Haman. God could, if hee would, have dashed his bloody counsel in the beginning; hee could have set the King against it. But hee lets him go on, and bring his design to ripenesse; and then declares a wonder, and ruines him and his counsel too.

And this is the reason why God suffers wicked men to go on, gather themselves together, bring their designs to the utmost: Because hee can break them in the end, as well as in the beginning. It is but doing a wonder at last, which is familiar with God, and all is broken in peeces. And therefore Melancthon saith, *Non est iudicandum de operibus dei ante quartum actum.*

2. Use.

Let it bee an Use of cautionall Advise to wicked men. Let them beware of designing or attempting any thing against the Church and People of God, seeing they have such a one on their side, as can, and will do Wonders for the relieving of them.

² Use is for Caution to the wicked

It was a truth, which Zerish Hamans wife told him, *Ester 6: 17.* -- *If Mordecai bee of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.* It seems it was a known truth of those dayes, even among Heathens, that there should bee no power, nor counsel against the Church of God. God would do wonders for them.

Gods people are dear to God; they are all the riches hee hath in the World: Hee calls them so: *His Inheritance, his Portion, his Jewels, his Treasure.* Hee hath a great deal of lumber in the world besides: but these are his Jewels only, and it cost him dear to make them Jewels. It was no lesser than the price of his own blood. As the Apostle saith -- *You were not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ,* 1 Pet. 1. 19. Gods people are all the Income Christ had for his blood and sufferings: all that

that Christ desired: all that God promised; and all he enjoys. As you see, Isa. 53. 11, 12. *Hee shall see of the travel of his Soul and shall be satisfied, &c.*

And do you think then, that God will not preserve his People? yes certainly, and will not stand to do wonders to preserve them. Assure your selves, God will never desert his cause, his Church, his People; when things are brought up to their ripenessse, that God is, as it were, drawn out to discover to the world, in what cause hee will stand, for what persons, hee will fight: Then he will declare it to the comfort of his Saints, and to the cost of all those, who are enemies to the Church of God.

God hath promised, *That hee will never leave us, nor forsake us.* Hee hath said -- *Hee will bee with us,* as hee was with *Joseph*, in Prison. And that not onely as a Spectator, but as an Actor; not as one to look on, and take notice onely: but as one to relieve and help us. His power shall bee with us, his Wisdome with us, &c.

And as hee is with his Church: so is hee against the Enemies of it. His Power is against them, before whom *All the Nations of the Earth are but as the drop of a bucket*: And his wisdome against them; his justice and truth against them. And Woe bee to them whom God is against. Thou maiest stand out against the power of men: but not of God, if he once prove thine enemy.

Hee hath a rod of Iron, a Scepter of power, an arm of strength to crush in peeces all his adversaries. And therefore as *Pilates Wife* said to her Husband: -- *Have nothing to do with that just man*: so I say to you, *Have nothing to do, by way of offence, against the Church, and People of God*; you will but ruine your selves, in seeking their ruine. *Gods Church is both too heavy, and too hot for you*; see them both, *Zach. 12. 3.* There God saith of his Church, *That hee would make it a burthensome stone: who ever listeth at it, shall bee crushed in peeces, though all the Nations of the world be gathered together against her, yet all will be to no purpose.*

For God will make his Church a burdonsome stone, that whosoever listeth at her shall be crushed in peeces. Hee doth not say, *whoever listeth it up*, for that cannot bee, but, *whoever listeth at it, whoever seeks to hurt it, shall crush themselves.* Their very attempt shall bee their destruction.

Haman listeth so long at this stone, that it fell on him at last, and crushed him to peeces.

Pharaoh followed the Children of Israel so long, that there was no return at the last: he was buried in the waters.

Julian attempted evil against the Church so long, till at last God from heaven struck him, slew him. The Church, God makes too heavy for his enemies, and too hot too. As you see in the 6. verse

8. verse of that 12th Chapter of *Zach.* In that day will I make the Governours of Judah, like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf: and they shall devour all the people round about.

All the encounters of wicked men against the Church, is but like a sheaf of straw encountering with a torch of fire, that burns themselves.

Whiles the iron is in its own nature you may handle it, and deal with it: but if once the nature of Fire be put to it, then ware your fingers, if you prove so bold and hardy as to touch it.

Wee say, He that shoots in a peece overcharged strikes down himself, not that hee aimed at. There was never man, who lettelled peece against the Church, but hee shoots in a peece overcharged, and shall be sure at last to be struck down with its own recoil.

They shall but lay snares, to take themselves; dig graves to bury themselves in, make rods for their own backs, and pave a way for their own destruction at last, *Isa.* 54. 15, 16, 17. Behold, the enemy shall gather himself, but without mee: whosoever shall gather himself in thee against thee, shall fall. Behold, I have created the Smith, that bloweth the coals in the fire, and him that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and I have created the destroyer to destroy. No weapon made against thee shall prosper: every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement, shalt thou condemn. This is the heritage of the Lords servants, &c.

God will work wonders for the deliverance of his Church; and for the destruction of the wicked at last. Let this bee for caution therefore to the wicked persecutors,

3. Use.

Let this bee for encouragement of Gods People, in these Times of danger and trouble. Though our condition bee very sad at this time, Our enemies strong, we weak; they full of rage and bitterness against us: yet there is no cause of fears, nor of discouragement.

1. There is no cause of fear, seeing wee have a God on our side; and such a God, as is able to do wonders for us. You may see God against all the strength, and provisions of the Arm of flesh.

Thus you see David did, *Psal.* 20. 7. Some trust in Chariots and some in Horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. He set God against all.

Alas! what are Castles and Forts? what are multitudes of men? what are riches? what is Provision of horse? the *Psal.* tells you, *Psal.* 33. 17. A Horse is but a vain thing to save a man; *Isa.* 31. 3. Their Horses are flesh, and not Spirit. --- *Prov.* 14. 29.

The Horse is prepared against the day of batel: but safety is of the Lord.

All this, and whatever an adversary may have to glory in, is but an arm of flesh: but you have a God, and a God that can do wonders for you. *I will boast in God* (saith the Prophet) *all the day long.*

Give not way then to sinkings of Spirit: you have no cause of fears, if you look above, as well as below: if you converse with Heaven as well as with Earth. Indeed, if wee look below, God for the relief of *(the weaknesse of our Faith)* hath stirred up the hearts of our worthys and People to afford so willing a concurrence in the service of the King and Kingdome at this time. But this is not our strength. Look above, and you have a God, who can, who will do wonders for you.

Fear is utterly unbeseeming

1 *A Christian, who is the souldier of Christ.*

2 *Religion, which is the Cause of Christ.*

1 *It is unbefitting a Christian.* For the Righteous should be bold as a Lyon. Let the sinners in Zion be afraid: not you, who have so great a God as can do wonders for you.

Luthers spirit doth well besit a Christian (especially in these days) who, when hee was dissuaded from going to Wormes; (about some extraordinary businesse of the Church) because of some Plots laid against him, he makes reply -- *Vocatus ingredi- ar, etsi scirem tot esse Diabulos Wormatia, quot sunt tegula in adium tectis.* I am called to it, and though every tile in the City were a devil, I would go. This was Resolution and courage besitting a Christian, who is a souldier of Christ. And

2 *Fear is unbeseeming Religion;* which is the cause of Christ. A good cause should have a good courage. It was the speech of Luther to Melancthon, who was an holy, though a fearful man, when Melancthon had discovered his fears to him. -- *If our cause be not good, let us desist, and leave it. If it bee good, let us go on courageously:* Christs cause, and a Cowards heart are ill coupled together.

Gods People are too apt to this: And therefore doth Christ steel the heart of his Disciples against it. -- *Fear not little flock.* Though a little flock: yet there is no cause to fear, having so strong a Shepherd. -- And, *fear not worm Jacob,* though a worm and weak, apt to bee trod upon: yet *fear not.* Isa. 41. 13, 14. -- *I will help thee, saith the Lord, thy Redemer; the holy-one of Israel.* -- And, *Who art thou, that are afraid of a man, that shall dye, and forgets the Lord, thy maker?* Arguing, if they had not forgotten God, they would not have feared man.

What though they bee carried on with all head-strong violence, to seek our ruine: what though their purposes be cruel: God can,

1. *Calm them, still them, as hee did the Sea. Peace and hee still,*
as he did Esau, when he came against Jacob.

2. *Stop them in their way.* Hee, that sets bounds to the Sea,
and saith hitherto shalt thou come, and here shalt thou stop: thy proud
waves: can set them at a full stand.

3. *So you see hee did Senacherib.* I will put my bridle into his
lips, and my hook into his nose. And I will bring thee back the same way
thou camest, &c. 2 King. 19. 33.

4. *Hee can turn them, and change their hearts:* as hee did Pauls,
when hee went out breathing threatnings, and slaughter against
the Church of Christ, Act. 9.

5. *Hee can over-turn them, over-power them,* even wherein they
deal proudly he will be above them; Exod. 18. 11. bring down
the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with
the shadow of a cloud, &c. Isay 25. 5.

6. *As there is no cause of fear,* so there is much lesse any cause of
discouragement; in these days of evil, God can do wonders.

7. *You shall never know what God can do,* nor what God will do,
till you stand in need: God loves to appear in time of extremity;
he loves to put forth himself in desperate cases.

8. *As the shipmans star never appears,* but before death: so Gods
Power never discovers itself, till a dissolution and death of second-
dary means.

9. *When wee have the sentence of death passed upon us,* in
respect of created helps and means: then is Gods time to step in
to recover and relieve us.

10. *You see this in the Apostle, 2 Cor. 1. 9. We received the sentence*
of death in our selves, that we might not trust in our selves, but in God,
who raiseth the dead.

11. *Wee should not know what God can do,* if it did not ap-
pear, what man cannot do; we should not know the power of God;
if we did not see the weaknesse of man.

12. *It was Bernards rapture upon the meditation of Adams sin.*
Felix culpa! qua talem meruit redemptorem. Happy fault! which
occasioned us such a Redeemer! I may better say. Happy necessity!
which occasioned the reliefs, of such a God; which ingageth God to help
us, and relieve us.

13. *Were it not for the greatnesse of our misery,* wee should not
have experiences of Gods mercy. And how many would say, I
would not lose the Experiences of Gods goodnesse, in such
a sad condition I was in, for a thousand worlds. I would rather
go through a thousand such sad conditions, than want one of
those experiences of his mercy in it.

14. *At these times you shall have Experience of Gods Power,* his
done, mercy, faithfulness, more than all your life. All which are
drawn out to help in need.

As I never knew confident strength to prosper, so I never reach

of trusting weaknesse to miscarry. If you peruse the word, you shall often read, that Gods people have miscarried in the strength of means, but never read, they miscarried in weaknesse. And the Reason is, because they trusted God in the one, and were self-confident in the other.

This is our spirit, when means are weak and wanting, then wee flye to God; but when means are strong to bring purposes to passe, wee are apt to rest upon them.

You see it was so with *Asa*: Once hee was weak, and then hee trusted: another time hee was strong, and then hee was self confident. And the issue in the one, was, -- *hee prospered*; in the other -- *hee miscarried*. Weak means were successful, because the strong God was in them; his Faith brought God into them: and strong means were unfruitful, because hee made God of them, hee trusted in them.

As God thinks himself neglected, when wee will not trust in him, in the presence of means: so hee thinks his power disparaged, when wee will not trust in him, in the absence of means. Not to trust in God in strength of means, is to neglect God. Not to trust in him in weaknesse of means, is to limit God.

God loves then to appear, when none else will, when none else can. It was the Argument which *David* had, *Psal. 22. 11.* -- *Be not far from mee, for trouble is neare; for there is none to help.* This was that whereby hee would ingage God to help: because there was none else to help him.

As it was said of the Redemption of the Church from sin: so it may be said of her deliverance from trouble. -- *When hee looks about, and sees no man, then his right hand shall bring salvation.* Hee will do a wonder to save you.

Though there be *Mountains of Oppositions* in the way, yet hee can incounter with them; and there are four wayes God deals with *Mountains*, with strong *Oppositions*.

1. *Hee either melts the Mountains*, hee dissolves them as water, *Isa. 64. 3.* -- *When thou shalt see terrible things, which were looked not for, when thou shalt see them, and the Mountains melted at thy presence.* -- In the former verse, they trembled at his presence; hee unhearted them, took away their courage: and here they flowed down at his presence. Not flowed up, or grew stronger: but flowed down, were melted and dissolved at his presence; hee took away their strength.

2. *Hee layes them into plains.* That is, Hee makes those *Mountains*, which were before impassable for greatness, now to be no *Opposition* at all, in the wayes of his people: Hee levels and laies even the hearts of the enemies, that they shall not be any hindrance to the passage of his people. And thus, *Isa. 40. 5.* -- *Who art thou, O great Mountain, before Zerubbabel? thou shalt be a plain.*

3. Hee

3. *Hee thraseth the Mountains:* Hee destroyes those, who stand to oppose Gods Church and People. So you have it; *Iſa. 41. 14, 15.* -- *Fear not, thou Worm Jacob; I will help thee; ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer.* Why, how will hee help? -- *Behold, I will make thee a ſharp Iron instrument with teeth; and thou ſhalt thrash the Mountains, and beat them ſmall, and make the Hills as chaff; and the wind ſhall carry them away; and the whirlwind ſhall ſcatter them: And thou ſhalt rejoyce in the Lord, and glory in the holy one of Iſrael.* -- Pharaoh was ſuch a Mountain, and ſuch an one was Sennacherib, but hee thrashed them both.

4. *Hee paſſeth over them.* Hee ſteps over the head of all Oppositions, which are in the way to the deliverance of his Church, *Cant. 2. 8.* *Chriſt is there deſcribed to -- come leaping over the Mountains, and ſkipping over the Hills.* And as hee did, when hee came to deliver his People from ſin, ſo hee doth often, when hee comes to redeem his Church from trouble, -- *Hee comes ſkipping over the Mountains,* paſſeth over the head of all opposition, when hee comes to deliver them.

And therefore trouble not your ſelves for the greameſſe of Opposition: Though there ſhould bee never ſo many Mountains of Opposition, yet God can melt them, or hee can level them, or thrash them, or ſkip over them. And one way or other God will do, for the deliverance of his Church.

Wee looke and pray for this laſt. That God would overlook all Oppositions, and come and help us.

4. *Uſe.*

Is God able to do wonders for his people? then if wee have been a people, whom God hath wrought wonders for: ſuch things as none but God alone could work: as indeed hee hath: let us hereby be taught three leſſons.

1. *Of Thankfulneſs.*

2. *Of Obedience.*

3. *Of Dependence.*

1. Here is a leſſon of thankfulneſs to be learned. Wee, even wee ſtand before God this day, the ſubjects of abundance of mercies. Many mercies God hath beſtowed on us, and long continued to us: Many evils hee hath kept from us, and many evils hee hath freed us from. Wee ſtand before God this day, the *brands of many glorious deliverances*, which God hath wrought for us. Wee have received more mercy, and have had experience of more goodneſſe, preveſting, delivering mercy, within theſe three years, than others have had in three Generations.

God hath diſcovered the wonders of his wiſdome, the wonders of his power, the wonders of his mercy and love, in many a glorious deliverance, which hee hath wrought for us. And how ought

wee

wee to bee carryed out with praises under the injoyments of so many mercies: how should our souls, being warmed with the sense and consideration of these mercies, burst forth into a flame of praises to G^od?

But alas! It is with us, as with the Children of *Israel*. Wee are very solicitous wanters, but wee are forgetful enjoyers. And that which should bee a means of drawing us nearer to God, is a means of further distance from him.

I must tell you, that your unthankfulness under all these receipts of mercy, is a great and a provoking sin, and might justly make a stop of mercy now.

1. *It is an inhumane sin, against the very principles of Humanity. A beastly sin, nay, worse, for the Oxe knows his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib. Its a devilish sin.*

2. *It is a sinning sin*: a productive sin, a womb of sin : it brings forth many more sins.

3. *It is the abuse of a good God.* Who can least of all indure to be abused in his mercies.

14. *It is the grave of Mercy.* Where all Gods mercies are buried and lost, a very land of forgetfulness.

5. It is the destruction of mercy, Hol. 2. 8, 9. -- Shee knew that I gave her Corne, and Wine, and Oil, and that I multiplied her silver and gold, &c. Therefore will I return, and take away my Corn in the season thereof, and my Wine in its season, and I will recover my Wool, and my Flax.

a) That which gives birth to mercy, is Prayer; and tha which gives breath to mercy is, Thankfulnesse. Mercy is but short breathed, short lived, when men are unthankful: Unthankfulnesse cuts the throat of Mercies. Unthankful persons are never long injoyers of mercies.

2. **A Lesson of Obedience.** Let the Mercy of God quicken you to duty. Look upon every mercy as a further engagement to you to walk more holily and more exactly with God.

As all the spiritual mercies of God, Election, Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, promises of Glorification, were all bestowed as engagements to Obedience: So all the temporal mercies also, *1 Sam. 12. 24. Therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in truth, with all your hearts, and consider what great things hee hath done for you.*

When mercies are spurs to duties, when mercies make the least addition to graces, God is well pleased with the bestowing of mercy, and where God sees such ground, hee delights to sow the seed of mercy.

3. *Learn a lesson of Dependence upon God.* It is a shame that we should be afraid to seek in every new difficulty. It was that which God blamed the Children of Israel for: That, notwithstanding the great and wonderful works, hee had done in their sight and eyes;

eyes; yet they did distrust him, all was not enough to work up their hearts to beleve God, and trust in him. And David blames them for the same, *Psal. 78. 19, 20.* -- *They spake against God, can God furnish a Table in the wilderness? Indeed hee smote the Rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed: But -- can hee give bread also? Can hee provide flesh for his people?* One would think this a senselesse reasoning. But Unbeleef is a senselesse sin. One would think that they did sufficiently answer themselves. That what went before, had been answer sufficient to what followed after. The same power was required for the doing of the one, that was for the other; and when they had seen the power of God to work the greater, 'twas strange they should doubt of the lesse, but here is the basenesse of our spirit, Though God have given us never so many experiences: yet wee are still to seek in every new act of dependence on him. And without further grace wee cannot do it.

Wee think, when wee are in straits and difficulties, if God would but help us through this strait, if hee would but relieve us in this difficulty; wee should never distrust God, whilst wee lived; wee should depend on him in the saddest conditions, whilst wee have a being.

But these are but our present thoughts, and without future assistances and supplies, wee are as far to seek in another, as wee were in the first.

Well, My Brethren: God hath wrought many great things for us: every one of them should bee a *Life-mercy*, a *standing-mercy*, a *mercy* to bee set up to *incourage us to depend on him for ever*: Mercies, that wee should live on in straits, and feed upon in difficulties; mercies that should bee for store to feed upon for a long time.

You have an expression, *Psal. 74. 14.* -- *Thou brakest the head of the Leviathan in peeces, and gavest him to bee meat to thy people in the Wilderness.* -- By *Leviathan* is meant *Pharaoh*: and God gave him to bee meat to his people in the wilderness. That is, Hee wrought that deliverance for them, before they entred into the wilderness, that this might bee meat for them to feed upon, and strengthen their Faith in dependence upon God in the wilderness, where they were put to it, by so many difficulties. This mercy was to bee a *standing-dish*, not for a meal only, but for store: meat laid in to feed on, to strengthen their dependence.

Faith is called Feeding, *John 6.* And the experience of Gods goodnesse is *Pabulum Fidei*: the meat of Faith. That mercy is never well digested, that is not fed upon. Hee that doth not feed upon a mercy, gets no nourishment by a mercy, no good. You take the Name of God in vain (that is, his works, his experiences, which are part of his Name) you take them in vain. All this is

but too cast away upon you, if thereby you are not strengthened for the Fuller dependence upon God.

And now my brethren, wee have had many *Glorious experiences of Gods goodness to us*: and all these are meat to feed upon. You are now in new straits and difficulties: bring out your standing-dishes, the former mercyes and experiences to feed upon; to refresh your Faith, to enable you to depend upon God afresh.

Hee that is not a good Treasurer, a good Storer of mercys, hee is never out of straits; hee is still to seek in every difficulty, and gone in every new strait: whereas hee who laies up Experiences, and can make use of them, feed upon them; hee shall be enabled thereby to depend upon God in any strait and difficulty whatsoever.

Thus you see David -- God delivered me out of the Paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear: and hee will deliver mee out of the hand of this Philistim. David feeds on the Lyon -- And, -- because he hath been my helper, therefore under the shadow of his wings will I rejoyce.

Now, in the passing of this duty of dependence upon you, I find two things to bee great enemies to it, which be you aware of.

1. Beware of Obliterating the Notions of God.

2. Beware of burying the remembrance of his works.

Beware of Obliterating the Notions of God. Had Moses seen God, and had the same Notions and apprehensions of God at the Rock, that he had at the Red sea, which was a far greater difficulty, then to fetch water out of the rock: he could have trusted in God for that, as well as for the former. But those thoughts and conceptions of God, were, for the present darkened, and over-shadowed with Passion, and therefore hee could not trust God then.

So, if David had had the same apprehensions of God, when he counterfeited himself Mad, for fear of Achimelech, the King of Gath; or when he was pursued by Saul, and burst forth into these words: *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*, which he had at other times, as when he saith, Ps. 27. 1, 2, 3. *The Lord is my light, and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? when the wicked mine enemies, and my foes came upon me, to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host pitched against mee, my heart should not be afraid: though war bee raised against mee, in this will I be confident.* Or when hee saith, to Saul concerning Goliath, *God, that delivered mee out of the Paw of the Lyon, &c. hee will deliver mee from this uncircumcised Philistim.* Or when hee saith, *God is our hope and strength, a help in trouble ready to bee found: therefore will not men fear, though the Earth bee moved, though the mountains bee hurled into the depth of the Sea.* Hee would not have fainted in these like, or lesse exigencies.

So,

So, had Abraham had the same apprehensions of God, when hee assigned his wife to be his Sister, which hee had, when God made him the Promise of a Sonne; or when hee went to sacrifice his Son: hee could have trusted and depended on God in this case as well as in the former: this difficulty being far short of the other.

So, did Gods people see God at all times, as they do at some times, they would then be able to depend on God, and trust in him, in any cases though never so difficult: but if they lose the apprehensions and conceptions of Gods, and suffer Passion and fear, to raise up a cloud to overshadow and darken their understandings, they shall never be able to believe, and depend upon God in any difficulty: and therefore first hold up the Notions of God, of his power, wisdom, mercy, and the like.

Beware of burying the remembrance of his former works, Psal. 78. 6, 7. They were commanded to tell the wondrous works of God to their children, that the generations to come might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God. Intimating that the best way to keep up their hope and dependance on God, was to hold up the remembrance of what hee had done. Hee, that forgets the one, will not be able to do the other.

And therefore you see it set down as a reason of the Disciples distrust. -- Their hearts were hardened. They forgot the miracles of the Lawes, Mark. 6. 52. Intimating, that if they had remembered that, they had not now been to seek in this present difficulty.

And indeed the want of the remembrance of former mercies doth cause us to distrust, and hinders us in our dependance on God for present and future Straits; whereas on the contrary, holding up the remembrance of former, will inable us to hold out in present and future distresses.

You cannot think his arm is shortned: you cannot think God cannot: nor can you think God will not: that he hath helped before, and will help no more: for mercy is tyed to the Church by covenant.

Wicked men may enjoy a mercy to day: but they can have no assurance to have another to morrow: because mercy is not tied to them by Promise, or by Covenant. But now mercy is tyed to the Church by Covenant, by Promise. Hee hath tyed his mercy to us by his Truth, Psal. 25. -- All his ways are mercy and truth, not only mercy, but truth.

All God doth is, but Performance of Promises; wee hold his mercy by Tenor of truth, and may challenge mercy by vertue of his truth. And therefore David could say, Psal. 23. 6. -- surely mercy and goodness shall follow mee all the days of my life.

Wicked men cannot, but the Saints may say, Mercy shall follow mee all the days of my life. Not in this, or that particular,

But in every passage of Providence, as the water followed the children of Israel, *the rock followed them*; 1 Cor. 10. 4. from one station to another, as long as they wandered in that dry and thirsty wilderness.

5. Use.

Doth God do wonders for his Church? Then it is good being on the Church's side. They have a God with them, that can do wonders for them; what though our enemies have skill, power, strength, and multitude; yet we have a God, who is stronger, than the strongest, wiser, then the wisest, who can over-power, and overplot our enemies, who alone can do wonders for us.

As Plutarch said of the Scythians, *that though they had no musick, nor vines: yet they had Gods among them.* So whatever is wanting to a people, if they have God with them, there is a plentiful supply of all. You may set God against all, and hee can weigh down all advantages.

When Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, sent his Herald with challenge again Francis the First, King of France; Hee commanded the Herald to proclaim him with all his Titles. Styling him, -- *Emperor of Germany, King of Castile, King of Aragon, of Naples, and of Sicile.*

Francis commanded his Herald to proclaim as often *King of France*; as the other had titles of honor by all his Countries. Implying, that *France alone was more worth, than all the Countreys, the other had.*

So, when our adversaries do glory in their strength, in their skill, in their power, and multitudes: let us oppose God against them; whom they oppose, and there is enough to weigh down what ever advantage the arm of flesh can have against us; we have a God with us, whilst wee are with him, with his cause, with his truth; And hee can do wonders for us.

6. Use.

Doth God do wonders for his Church? Then let us fall down and adore this God, who can do wonders for us. -- Who would not fear thee O King of Nations! saith the Prophet, Jer. 10. 7.

It was the speech of an Heathen King, when hee had seen the Wonders that God had done: -- *Let all men fear and tremble before the God of Daniel.* Dan. 6. 26.

When Christ had done that great wonder in calming the rage of the sea, the Text tells us, -- *They all fell down at the feet of Jesus, and worshipped him.* Gods wonders for us, call out for our worship of him.

Fall down then, at the feet of this God, and worship him.

Fall down at the feet of his Power, and dread
 Fall down at the feet of his Mercy, and adore
 Fall down at the feet of his Wisdom, and admire
 Admiration is suitable to Wonders.

It is said -- He shall be admired in his Saints. When wicked men tremble, do you fall down and admire, and bless that God, whose power doth wonders. He will make God quickly to be known to you.

7. Use.

Doth God do wonders for his Church, and are we now in a sad condition? A people that shall be made a wonder, unless God do a wonder for us. Oh! then let us carry our selves in such a deportment and demeanour, as is suitable to such who are spectators that God should do wonders for us. Oh! that we could put our selves in a posture fit for mercy and deliverance! In doing you look for a new Heaven, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness (saith the Apostle) what manner of persons ought you to be? So, seeing you look, you expect that God should do wonders for you: Oh! What manner of persons ought you to be in Holiness of Life! how holy, how humble, how spiritual ought you to be in all manner of conversation! Oh! take heed of sinning in the face of mercy, in the face of deliverance. Lye not, swear not, &c. It was a sad aggravation of Israel's sin: They provoked God at the Red Sea, even at the Red Sea, it is doubled, to put a greater Emphasis on it. Psal. 106. 7.

It is nothing but our sins, which hinders the current and access of Mercy: if these were removed, mercy would come. Whereas on the contrary, sin will not only make our hearts alienate from the good purposes of God to become adverse to us. You see it in Jer. 18. 9. 10. He that I had said, I will build a Nation, or a Kingdom, to build and to plant it: If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice: Then I will repent of the word which I said, I would benefit them.

Many buds, and many blossoms of future deliverance have appeared. Oh! it were a sad thing if our sins should blight these, and rob us of the fruit of our hopes, of our prayers, and tears. Our sins are obstructions to all Gods proceedings of Mercy.

And therefore you see, when the Temple was to be built, and great things were to be done for them: The Prophets, by way of necessary preparation, exhorts the people to repentance, to cast away their sins. And knowing this, that though God had begun, yet if they continued in their sins, they would quickly make a step of Gods mercy: God would be repent of his mercy to them. God had brought Israel out of Egypt, and brought them near

Canaan; yet their sins coming between them and Canaan, turned them back again into the Wilderness, and there they walk in a Round forty years, before they could finde admission into Canaan.

God is gone out before us, triumphing in the greatnesse of his strength, preparing a way, hewing down difficulties, levelling mountains, turning all our oppositions into good: But if you do not leave your sins, you will make God quickly to leave you, so to work your own confusion.

Well then. You are all expectants of Mercy, let every one set on labour to put himself into a posture fit to receive mercy: Let every one walk and demean himself, as such as looks for great things from God: And then that God that hath begun, will assuredly make an end: Hee that hath laid the foundation, and is laying stone after stone upon it every day, will not desist till the building bee perfected.

8 Use.

Learn
1 To trust in
God.

Is it so, that God doth wonders for his Church? then learn, 1. To trust in God. You see, Hee is a God doing wonders. And (as Christ said, Mark 9. 23.) If thou canst but believe: All things are possible to him that believeth: Wonders are possible.

There is nothing too hard for God to do; If there bee nothing too hard for you to beleieve. There is nothing difficult, but to beleieve: Hee that hath conquered and overcome his own unbelieve, hath done all: All things are possible to the Believer. Do not you stick at beleieving, and God will not stick at doing wonders for you, Heb. 11. 33. 34. By Faith they subdued Kingdoms, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, &c. As unbelieve doth imprison Gods power, mercy, and goodnesse, so Faith sets God at liberty, sets the power of God at liberty. Nay, it puts on the power and mercy of God. Therefore exercise Faith. The time of our trouble, should bee the time of our trust.

As Moses said to Pharaoh: God set her up for such a time as that: So I may say of Faith. God set up Faith for such a time as that.

When means fail; when there is nothing but weakness below, when teares and reason are past, then is it Faiths work to come in. And therefore exercise Faith.

Let not any difficulties and doubts, Let not any seeming discouragement come between your souls and the promise. Things marvelous to you, are familiar with God: things wonderful to you, are easy to God: You have babes. Oh! that

zech. 9. 6.

and H you

you had Faith to make use of them: you would there finde, all things are possible with God; and therefore nothing impossible to Faith.

2. *Be encouraged to Prayer.* This is the great work of our times. ^{2 To pray is God.} Faith and Prayer will do wonders: Faith and Prayer have had an hand in most of the wonders that ever were done in the Earth. These will set the great God on doing wonders for us. A Prayer made up of promises, and put up by Faith, will shew wonders in Heaven and in Earth.

You read what wonders Gods people have wrought by Prayer. They have -- *dried up the Sea*; Exod. 14. 21. -- *brought fire from Heaven*; 2 King. 1. 10. -- *Caused the Sun to stand still*; Josh. 10. 13. -- *Vanquish the enemy*; Exod. 17. 12. *Praying Moses did more than fighting Joshua.*

The day would fail to tell you of all. See what wonders followed upon Davids Prayer, Psal. 18. 6. -- *In my distress I called upon the Lord, I cryed to my God, hee heard my voice out of his Temple, my cry came unto his ears.* -- See what followes, vers. 7, 8; 13. 14. -- *Then the Earth shook and trembled; The Lord shundered in the Heavens, and the highball gave his voice. Hailstones, and chals of fire, hee sent out his arrows, and scattered them, hee shot out his lightnings, and discomfitted them.*

And an excellent place you have, Isa. 54. 15. -- *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.* -- That is, shall both defend from his violence, and put him to flight. And it is an observable phrase: *The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard.* That is, Faith one, *The Spirit of Prayer is lift up.*

When trouble and evil are threatned, the enemy comes like a flood irresistibly, then the Spirit of the Lord stirring up Prayer in his peoples hearts, shall lift up a standard against them, be your defence, and chase them away.

When God doth intend to bestow great things on his People, first hee gives them the Spirit of Prayer, the Harbinger and Forerunner of mercy; Jer. 3. 19. -- *But I said, How shall I put thee among the Children, and give thee a pleasant land?* As if hee had said, I have purposes of mercy to thee: I have thoughts of deliverance. I think to bring thee into thy own land again, and do wonders for thee. But what way shall I go to effect, and bring about this? -- *And I said, thou shalt call mee, my Father.* As if hee had said, I have now bethought mee of a way. I will pour a Spirit of Prayer upon thee, and thou shalt call mee Father, and so I will put thee among my Children.

3. *Be encouraged to hope,* as well as to pray. Hope, Heb. 6. 19. it is called the anchor of the soul, true and stedfast, that takes sure hold, and then breaks not, in the greatest tempest; at such an anchor wee may ride in the most outrageous storm. They say, blue W 1 H 3 Clemens

3 Encourage-
ment to hope
in God.

element was cast into the Sea with an anchor fastened to him, and could not drown; wee shall not in the deepest Waters, if wee bee fastened to this anchor; for *God delights in them; who hope in his Mercy*; Psal. 147: 11, and whom God delights in; enemies shall not delight over, his mercy shall prevent their utterly undoing-misery: *Hope is the Daughter of Faith*, therefore when Faith hath brought forth the birth of Prayer, let it bring forth the other Twin also of Hope: And then also

4. To wait on God.

4. *Be encouraged to wait.* For as long as we hope we will wait, and no longer, as long as you expect, and hope your friend will come to you, so long you will stay and wait for him, but give over hoping once, and then you will together give over waiting: Hope hath two acts; it expects that a Mercy will come, and then it waits till it do come, as it is confident of Gods goodness and truth, that in his due time hee will shew mercy, so it is conscious to its own duty, and therefore humbly and patiently waits Gods leisure, till that time come; and this although many cross Providences, and greatest dangers should come between, yea in the way of thy Judgements. *O Lord, have wee waited for thee*, saith the Church, *Isa. 26. 8.* and well they may, seeing by experience they ever find that *the Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him*; Lam. 3. 25.

And then, when you have learned these lessons of *trusting in God, praying, hoping, and waiting on him*: Then you shall say with the Church, *Isa. 25. 9.* *For, this is our God, wee have waited for him, and hee will save us. This is the Lord, wee have waited for him; wee will rejoice and be joyful in his salvation.*

There are many glorious wonders which God is now to do, at the latter end of the World for his Church. This time is reserved for a time of Wonders. And who knows but this may bee one of the Wonders which God now doth for his Church at this time?

Could wee but remove

1. Our Unbelief.
2. Our Unthankfulness.
3. Our Neglect of Duty.
4. Our Unworthy Walking.

Could wee but

1. Believe more Strongly.
2. Pray more Freely.
3. Live more Holily.

And God would do Wonders for us.

I tell you, the way to ingage God to do Wonders for England,

1. To Believe more.
2. To Pray more.
3. To Reform more.

I Would

1. Would you ingage God to do Wonders for England: Beleeve. Set Faith on work, and you will work in the bowels of a Promise; y^e, in the bowels of God, pitch Faith upon God. Let Faith have her full and perfect work. And there is

No Temptation so strong, but Faith will conquer,

No Affliction so great, but Faith will master,

No Prison so strait, but Faith will open,

No Danger so great, but Faith relieves us in.

No Misery so unsufferable, but Faith will deliver us out.

Do but beleeve, (saith Christ) and thou shalt see the wondrous works of God. As if hee had said: God will do no wonders, if you will not beleeve: Indeed God can do wonders, as Christ said, Hee could not do much because of their unbelief.

Though unbelief take no Power, no Wildome, from God: For as the Apostle saith -- God is faithfull, whether man beleeve or no, So I may say -- God is Powerfull, God is mercifull, God is Wise, &c. though we beleeve not: But, though our unbelief do not weaken the Power of God, yet it straitens and limits it. Though it rob God of no mercy, yet it robs us of all: Though he hath mercy, yet hath he none for us.

Well then, that is the first, Beleeve; You have to deal with a God; and this God is a God of Power, and this God, and this power is yours in Covenant: And, by vertue of that, all for your good. Let Faith now stirre; Mark. 9. 23. If you can but beleeve, all things are possible: wonders are possible.

To Beleeve is difficult; but to him, that Beleeueth, nothing is impossible -- if you had but faith, as a grain of mustard-seed, say to this mountain bee thou removed hence; and bee cast into the sea, and it shall bee done. Though Faith bee but weak; though but small, A grain, yet if it be but lively, if a grain of Mustard-seed, Acris, & Feruida: if it have Acrimonie and Vivacity in it, as Mustard-seed hath; one grain shall bee able to remove a mountain. That is, whatever may bee to the glory of God, and the good of his Church, be it never so difficult: the least Faith, if true Faith, will effect it, and bring it about.

You shall read in Heb. 11. 33. what wonders Faith hath wrought. It hath the same Power, and the same God of power to deal with still.

Incouragements to Faith, I have given you diverse; in the former discourses, from the Power, from the love of God, from all those former experiences, that both our selves, and generations before have had of Gods goodnesse. As I have shewed at large;

Would you ingage God? pray to him; we have had many praying days. They began for Ireland; but may bee continued for England. And oh! that this day might be more successful than former days!

You

You that carry Irelands miseries, Englands breaches and distractions in your bosomes, send out armies of Prayers; let your closets, and the Churches bear witness of your sense of, and fight for the miseries.

And resolve to give God no rest, till hee hath established Zion, the joy and praise of the whole earth. Ask and desire largely of God for his Church. God hath a larger heart to give, than you to begge. Hee will suffer no creature to equall him, in his love to his Church. You shall not ask more, than hee is willing to bestow, Eph. 3. 20. *Hee is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we are able to ask or think,* and Jer. 33. 3. *Call unto mee; and I will answer thee, and shew thee mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

Well then, let no Difficulty undermine your Faith: no, nor Discouragement put you off from seeking.

Jacob held up to pray, notwithstanding all his discouragements: Though hee wrestled in the night, though hee was all alone, though God told him, hee would leave him, though hee stood to his losse, and God smote him in his thigh, yet he held out to wrestle with God.

Hee that would prevail with God, must not onely Pray, but continue in Praying. *Jacob prayed all night, David day and night, Jonah three dayes and three nights, Daniel 21 dayes, and 21 nights, Moses forty dayes, and forty nights.* Though God delay, though God defer, though God deny, yet hold out. Break in upon Gods retireings; urge God with his own Promises, with his glory, with his name, with his truth, with his worship, &c. All which are more pretious to him than a world.

I have told you, that there shall be nothing Too hard for that People to do, whose hearts and spirits God doth mightily hold up to seek him.

You know what wonders Prayer hath done, *It dried up the Sea, &c.* And wee have had experience of the fruit of Prayer more than any. God did never honor Prayer more in any age, than in our Generation. It hath been the great Engine, that hath carried all Gods purposes about. Nothing hath been done without, and nothing hath been done against prayer.

You may revolve in your thoughts, the wonders God hath wrought, within these three, or four years, for this Church, and our neighbouring Nations.

Wee have prayed dead, and prayed alive, breathed life and death by prayer, we have prayed into bonds, and prayed out of bonds, as Peter was.

When sin had drawn the sword, prayer sheathed it again, when sin had overspread us, and covered us with a cloud of blond, Prayer dispelled and scattered this. To God give the glory.

And you, who have had experience of this before, bee you quickned

quickned and encouraged to it again. Be mighty with God, Faith and Prayer will work wonders.

3 Would you ingage God to do wonders for you: adde a third ingagement, and that is

Reformation. Supplication is nothing without Reformation.

The Arm of the Lord is not shortened, that hee cannot save: nor his ear heavy, that hee cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that hee will not heare. As if the Prophet had said, God is as powerful, and as merciful as ever hee was: hee is as able to do wonders, and as willing as ever hee was.

3 Reformation.

And the reason, why hee doth them not, is *because your sinnes do separate betwixt you and your God, your sins rob you of all the good.*

You look upward, to see whether God will help.

You look downward, to see whether man can help.

But what is all this, if you do not look inward to find out your sins, and cast them away, which hinder help, you have that the *reast. Judges 10. 10, 11, 12. God had oftentimes delivered them, as hee tells them these, and they were now again in new distresses, and therefore cry to God, But God tells them, they had walked unworthy of former deliverances, and therefore he would deliver them no more: whereupon they go and confesse their sinnes before God, they humble themselves, and reform their evil wayes: and then, saith the Text; -- His soul was grieved for the misery they were in, God did then deliver them.*

Well, this is our case, wee have been a people, who have injoyed many great mercies and deliverances, but now we are in new straits.

Let us go and humble our selves, but reform too, else Gods soul may not be grieved for our miseries, it wee will grieve him with our sins, but

When God sees us to be cruel to our sins, hee will then bee merciful to our souls, when he sees us to be grieved for our sins, he will then be grieved for our miseries.

Reform your Families, your Parishes, your persons, good and bad: set ye upon the work of Reformation, and God will not stick to do a wonder for us.

God is driving on the great design of his own glory. It is our wisdom to take notice of it, and in this way to further it, and not to hinder it.

Oh then! Reform. Twere a fearful thing, that the Nation should perish, because thou wilt not reform.

God will never bee merciful to that man, who is merciful to his sins. You read what the Prophet said to Ahab, *Because thou hast spared the man, that was reserved to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life.*

Well

Well then, Hear the Nation, Hear Religion, hear all calling out upon you, **reform.**

1 **Let the wicked reform.**

2 **Let the Saints reform.**

1 **You wicked ones, do you reform,** Your profaneness, Oathes, blasphemies, uncleannesse, your contempt and hatred of Gods Truth, Ordinances, ways, servants, &c. for else one sinners as **Achan**, may make an halt in Israels march into **Canaan**, and how much rather, if the whole Camp be full of such.

2 **You Saints, Bee reformed**

1 **Of your Pride.**

2 **Of your Lukewarmnesse.**

3 **Of your Formality.**

4 **Of your Covetousnesse.**

5 **Of your Vanity in your Speeches.**

6 **Of your Unthankfulness for Gods mercies.**

7 **Of your Unfruitfulness under means of Grace.**

8 **Of your Censoriousnesse of your Brethren.**

And this Land-Reformation, would prevent a Land-Desolation, when God sees us a repenting People, hee will be a **Penitencing-God**, when hee sees us in a **Posture of Reformation**: he will be in the way of **Preservation**.

FINIS.

Books Printed, and are to be sold by **Thomas Parkhurst**, who Prints and sells this Book of **Dr. Samuel Bolton** at the Sign of the **Three Crowns**, over against the **Great Conduit**, at the lower end of **Cheapside**.

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Thou happy voyager so soon to gain
A peaceful heaven free from toil and pain
No more by rugged storms and tempests tost
Thy little bark has gained the wished for coast
Thy Infant spirit now